Compiled by D. Preman Niles

JUSTICE PEACE AND THE INTEGRITY OF CREATION

Towards an ecumenical process of commitment

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JUSTICE, PEACE AND THE INTEGRITY OF CREATION

Documents from an Ecumenical Process of Commitment

[Final report]

Edited by
D. Preman Niles

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PREFACE

It is over four years since the World Convocation on Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation took place in March 1990 at Seoul, Republic of Korea. Shortly after the convocation, the final document and the message from the convocation were published in English (*Now is the Time*), German, French and Spanish. In 1992, a book entitled, *Between the Flood and the Rainbow: Interpreting the Conciliar Process of Mutual Commitment (Covenant) to Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation*, edited by D. Preman Niles, was published by the WCC. This collection of essays interprets the convocation itself. It also contains the final document from the world convocation. The intention of the book was to be of help in clarifying some of the continuing debates on the ecumenical process and to be a contribution to the process itself.

The purpose of the present book is to make available in one volume resource materials on JPIC. The documents prepared during the process leading up to the convocation are now out of print. The various types of materials presented at the convocation are not readily available in English. (A German version has been published.) All these are still of value, even though in some details events have moved on. The materials in this book depict both the convocation's common positions and the tensions as well as unresolved debates which continue in the JPIC process.

The materials have been grouped into four sections. The **first section** is on worship, which many found to be the most meaningful, if at times also controversial, part of the convocation. The article describes the purpose and mood of the worship, which was intended to give a theological structure for the convocation. It also provides a selection of worship materials. The **second section** is a collection of the meditations and sermons at the worship. These expound the theme for the day and describe specific situations of suffering and hope. The pathos and intensity with which the worship as a whole dealt with the theme of justice, peace and the integrity of creation could not be reflected in the analytical and deliberative documents of the convocation. For many, this was unacceptable - a reason why there was so much disagreement with the documents and even led to the

rejection of the theological section of the document, "Between the Flood and the Rainbow". At the heart of the controversy was the tension between specific contextual realities and globally agreed ecumenical responses. The **third section** brings together the plenary speeches and lectures including the key-note address of Rev Dr Frank Chikane. The **fourth section** is a collection of the various important messages addressed to the convocation. These represent various positions on JPIC from the perspectives of churches or various Christian groups. The message of the convocation ends this section. The **fifth section** contains some of the major documents produced during the JPIC process. The study on the Integrity of Creation was probably the only major JPIC effort in which there were participants not only from all the major church traditions, including the Roman Catholic Church, but also from other faith traditions. The Eastern and Oriental Orthodox response to the Second Draft document highlights one of the major theological controversies raised in using "covenant" and "covenanting" to flesh out in theology and worship the call "to mutual commitment." Fuller Orthodox contributions on JPIC from consultations in 1987 (Sofia) and 1989 (Minsk) JPIC are found in *Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation: Insights from Orthodoxy,* edited by Gennadios Limouris, WCC Publications, Geneva, 1990, pp.1-27. Though a positive statement of the Roman Catholic position on JPIC, the Roman Catholic contribution was also occasioned by a dissatisfaction with the mood and content of the theological statements made by the JPIC Preparatory Group. Only the first, theological section of the document is given here as a study document. (As noted above, it was rejected by the convocation.) The second and third sections of the document were substantially revised by the convocation, and are found in the Final Document from Seoul which is printed in *Between the Flood and the Rainbow: Interpreting the Conciliar Process of Mutual Commitment (Covenant) to Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation,* ed. D. Preman Niles, WCC Publications, 1992.

August 1994 D. Preman Niles

I. WORSHIP

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Worship at the convocation

Sherina P. Niles
Sri Lanka

All Christian assemblies, by whatever name they may be called, are first and foremost gatherings for worship. This was true also of the world convocation for justice, peace and the integrity of creation. Worship was central to the convocation. So much so that both worship and deliberations were held in the same meeting hall. The JPIC process and the world convocation were an invitation to the churches and Christians to be engaged in the struggles for justice, peace and the integrity of creation. Through its worship, the world convocation gave shape and spiritual depth to the commitments that were made.

In the first part, I describe how the worship at the convocation was designed and highlight one or two events or actions, planned or unplanned, that gave a special meaning to each day's worship and work. As a visitor at the convocation I could not take part in all the official work of the convocation. In many ways this was not a bad thing. Much of my time was spent in helping and participating in the worship, and listening to the views and feelings of participants and visitors. These influences are reflected in what I say. In the second part, I give some excerpts from the worship at the convocation which express each day's theme. (Since quite a lot of copyrighted material was used at the worship, it is not possible to print all the services.) Also included is a service of covenanting, using material used at the closing service of the convocation, which was published earlier in *Now is the Time: Final Document and Other Texts from the JPIC World Convocation.* These worship materials are given in the expectation that many might want to use them in their own JPIC worship events. The sermons and bible studies used during the worship at the convocation are given separately in this book.

I. Worship at the Convocation and Some Highlights

To give cohesion and a sense of movement to the convocation, each of the seven days was characterized by a particular "moment" from the liturgy which was emphasized in the worship. Not only the order of worship for the day, but also the meditations, Bible studies, lectures, personal testimonies, songs, poems and dances focussed on the theme for the day. The mood and tone set at the worship were carried through the day. I

give below the seven "moments" that were chosen with the Bible passages that were used. The main text for the day is highlighted.

Day 1 Praise and Adoration (**Psalm 104**, Rev. 7:9-17; Mat. 5:43-48)
Day 2 Repentance/Confession and Announcing of Forgiveness (**Amos 5: 7,10-24**; Psalm 51:3-19; Mark. 1:14-15)
Day 3 Proclamation of the Word of Hope (**1 Pet. 3:8-17**; Isa. 55:6-13; John 1:1-18)
Day 4 Affirmation of Faith (**Rom. 8:1-27**; Deut. 30:6-15; Luke 4:16-30)
Day 5 Intercession (**Mat. 6:5-13**; 1 Tim. 2:1-4; 1 Sam. 2:1-10)
Day 6 Commitment (**Gen. 9:8-17**; Isa. 58:1-12; Mat. 16:24-26)
Day 7 Covenanting and sending forth (**John 17:9-26;** Jer. 31:31-34; I Cor. 11:23-26)

On the first day, at the opening service, the convocation gave praise and adoration for the goodness of life and for the whole created universe - its beauty, its mystery, its challenge. Also emphasized were God's actions in history that bring about justice and peace. The preacher at this service was one of the presidents of the convocation, Dr. Marga Bührig.

At the beginning of the service, young children carried a large inflated globe-map of the world and placed it at the centre of the stage. They were accompanied by Korean dancers and drummers, who initiated the mood of celebration that was to mark the opening worship. While the service was going on, suddenly the globe started spinning and moving because of a strong gust of wind which came through one of the open doors of the gymnasium. The globe would have been blown off-stage if the children who brought it in had not rushed on to the stage and held on to it. To many of us this was a parable. It is their world we are talking about! It is their world that we are trying to destroy! While we adults sit at meetings and conferences and deliberate the future of the world, the children are clinging on to it to keep it safe.

The theme for the second day was repentance/confession and the announcing of forgiveness. It was a day to remember the brokenness of creation and of human relations. The whole morning was devoted to worship. In the first session we heard testimonies of suffering from aboriginal people, people suffering under racism, sexism, casteism. They spoke for many of us who had been the victims of such oppression. During the coffee break when only water was served by the participants to one another, we could listen to each other and ask for each other's forgiveness.

During the second part there was the announcing of forgiveness. The preacher was Bishop Barbara Harris of the Episcopal Church of the United States of America. For many of us it was a moment of great joy that a black,

woman bishop was to preach on the theme of repentance and forgiveness. It was sad that Orthodox bishops and priests chose to stay away from that service. They felt that in good conscience they could not be present at a service of worship in which a woman bishop, from a church whose episcopate they recognized, was to take part. Even at this gathering, the deep divisions and disagreements within the churches were evident.

On the day of penitence and repentance, the service ended with the following invitation:

> Sisters and brothers,
> within the moments of the liturgy in which our convocation takes place, today is the day for penitence and repentance. We have listened to testimonies; we have been made aware of the structures of injustices of which we are a part. We dare not stand aloof, for we know that God whom we worship is with the poor, the oppressed and the despised of this earth.
>
> We will, therefore, express our solidarity with all who are violated - peoples, nations and nature - by taking part in a simple solidarity meal. And may this corporate act of penitence strengthen our resolve to work for justice, peace and the integrity of creation.
>
> (Participants had this meal in silence.)

On the third day there was the proclamation of the word of hope. It was an opportunity for the convocation to celebrate what the Bible and the Christian faith have to say about JPIC. At the service there were two major Bible studies.

In preparation for the convocation, many women's groups from all over the world had made ribbons - 90cm by 45cm - depicting some aspect of the JPIC theme or struggle from their perspective. In essence these were all attempts to depict hope. All these ribbons were brought to the convocation and were strung together to decorate the place of our meeting. These were paraded by women at the convocation during the worship service on the third day.

At the worship on the fourth day emphasis was placed on affirming our faith in terms of our commitment to justice, peace and the integrity of creation.

We affirm our faith in a world divided by walls. Many walls of separation of various kinds have been built in our world. There are walls separating Christians from Christians, one religious group from another, nations from nations, people from people, the North from the South, and the East from the West. During the service of worship a wall was built to symbolize such

divisions. It was then broken down so that people standing on one side could cross over to the other side and see the picture of the world from the other side of the wall. Just before the convocation at least one such wall had come crumbling down - the infamous Berlin wall. This was a sign of hope that enabled the convocation to affirm our faith in a world divided by walls.

The theme for the fifth day was intercession - a day to remember in prayer the victims of injustice, violence and the degradation of the environment as well as those who suffer hardship and punishment because of their commitment to specific struggles for justice, peace and the integrity of creation.

During this day, a group of indigenous people from North America met quietly outside the convocation premises in worship. Using the peace pipe in prayer they interceded for the whole creation. A simple but all-encompassing indigenous prayer from North America says, "For all my relatives."

The sixth day was a day for commitment. Since it was a Sunday, the participants joined local congregations in worship, and as far as possible used the occasion to speak of their commitment to justice, peace and the integrity of creation. In the evening after dinner, the convocation heard of the many covenants and commitments made during the convocation between groups of people. Of particular significance in this regard was the Palestinian Israeli Covenant between the representatives of the three religious groups from the Holy Land, Jews, Moslems and Christians. They pledged to work in 1989 for the following goals which in 1993 seem to be distinct possibilities:

- An end to Israeli occupation and an end to the violation of human rights.
- No further building of Israeli settlements in the occupied territories.
- Mutual recognition and self-determination for both peoples through negotiations between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization.
- Sovereignty for both peoples through the recognition of a Palestinian State in the Palestinian homeland alongside the State of Israel.

The theme for the seventh and final day was covenanting and sending forth. During the closing service, all the participants and visitors stood up and walked to the stage where the globe was, and put their hands on the globe, while others who could not touch the globe linked hands with those in front of them. Human chains were formed from the globe; and they committed themselves to work for justice, peace and the integrity of all God's creation.

A large brass oil lamp with three tiers and seven wicks on each tier was kept at the centre of the stage. At the opening service, one wick was lit and then another wick on every subsequent day. On the seventh day all seven wicks on all three tiers were lit. The oil lamp was then taken to the dining hall where all the participants gathered for the closing act of sending forth. The lights were switched off. In a large darkened room where only the brass lamp cast its light, Archbishop Walter Khotso Makhulu, one of the presidents of the convocation, led us in a closing act of worship. Seven members of the JPIC Preparatory Group lit their clay lamps from the large oil lamp and carried these lights to the tables at which the participants sat with their small clay lamps. One person at each table lit his/her lamp and then lit the lamp of his/her neighbour, till all the small clay lamps were lit. The whole hall was lit by the light of the small lamps as each remembered that we too are small and fragile like these clay lamps. But each holds the oil of life and the light of knowledge endowed by God for the struggle for JPIC. Spontaneously we all started singing "Dona nobis pacem." At the end, Archbishop Makhulu gave the benediction. All of us who were at the convocation have these small clay lamps to remind us of the time we committed ourselves (covenanted together) to work for justice, peace and the integrity of all God's creation.

II. Worship Material from the Convocation

From Day 1 - Praise and Adoration:

Gathering of the Community

Leader: Sisters and Brothers,
We come in anticipation to this World Convocation;
We come because we believe that God whom we love and serve is Creator of this world.

We come because we believe that God is the creator of justice on the earth and peace among all the people.

All: We declare that the world belongs to God; Creation is God's gift of life -Justice and Peace God's will for the world.

L: In the days to come we will explore together the meaning of this affirmation for us in our time.

Women: We will seek to enter into the experience of those who bear witness to the violation of God's gift of life and to

stand in solidarity with all for whom justice has been denied and peace destroyed.

Men: Let us learn to listen to each other with patience and love.

All: We will seek to renew old promises and make new commitments together for justice, for peace and for the integrity of creation.

Men: Let us do so knowing that God's faithfulness and commitment to us is greater than anything we can offer.

All: We come to covenant with God and with one another.
We come to make God's promises our own.
We come to commit ourselves anew to one another
We come to stand together against all threats to life.

Women: Let us do so with repentance and in faith, for we are so often unfaithful to our covenants with God and with each other. Let these be the days when God kindles a fire in our souls opening us to one another and to the source of life.

All: God do a new thing among us!

L: Let us pray:
O God, whose love reaches to the heavens,
whose faithfulness knows no end,
who keeps the covenant made with those who have gone before and with all creation: lead us into the knowledge of the greatness of your love.
Open our eyes to see the wonder of the world you have created. Teach us to rejoice in your just will for us all.

Prayer for Creation

Let us pray:

Eternal God,
We thank you for the glory of your creation -
a mystery that surpasses our knowledge.
Eternal God,
We thank you for the earth and water, sun and wind,
creatures and people - cultures and nations:
We gather to confess that we have violated the gift of life

given to us.
Strengthen us as we seek to affirm
that the earth and all therein is yours.

Enable us as we seek to recall your covenant
and make it our own.

Prayer for Justice

L: Ever loving God,
You have taught us that justice is your will and your way.
We are grateful for the lessons of love taught by the life, death and resurrection of your son Jesus.
We come in full recognition of the reality that justice is expected of us and yet we confess that our days have been marked with injustice.

We pray this day, O God, that we might be moved to act against injustice so that all might have life abundant, full and free.

Let us remember those women and men who gave their lives in the struggle for justice and let their sacrifice be an inspiration to us.

Let us pray:

Righteous God,
Hear our prayer,
hold all those who suffer in your ever-lasting arms.
Lead us to discern injustice and to resist with all our being.
Enable us to be in solidarity with all who are oppressed.
Lead us to follow Jesus who was unjustly put to death,
whom you did raise again as our very living hope.
Praise be to God.
Amen!

Prayer for Peace

L: In the midst of a hungry, hurting and war weary world
Let us pray for peace.

Soft singing.

L: God will settle disputes among nations,
among the powers near and far.
They will beat their swords into ploughshares

and their spears into pruning hooks.

All: Nations will never again go to war
never again prepare for battle
Everyone will live in peace
among their own vine and fig tree.

Music stops.
Children say together:
No one will be afraid
The Lord almighty has promised us this.
Dona nobis ....(louder)

All: Amen, Amen.

Signs of Peace and Reconciliation

L: Because God first loved us
and gave his son as sacrifice for our sins
the good news is WE ARE FORGIVEN
As freed and forgiven people, we are called to love one another as
God loves us.
Let us extend to one another the sign of peace and reconciliation.

Lord's prayer (each in their own language)

Benediction

Go forth in peace;
be of good courage;
hold fast to that which is good;
render to no one evil for evil;
strengthen the faint-hearted;
support the weak;
help the afflicted;
Honour all people, love and serve the Lord,
rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.
And the blessing of God, the Father, the Son
and the Holy Spirit, be upon you,
and remain with you for ever.

From Day 2 - Penitence and Confession

A Litany of Thanksgiving

Leader: God, we thank you that your love is greater
than all that is wrong in our lives.
Greater than our failure
to live according to your will

People: We are forgiven people, freed to begin anew.

L: God, we thank you for every precious moment
of forgiveness and reconciliation
in our own lives and in the lives of communities and nations.

P: We are forgiven people, freed to begin anew.

L: God, we know there is till much
that divides us from one another and from you.
In the struggle for more just and loving relationships
there is no cheap forgiveness between oppressor and oppressed
not everything can be reconciled.
But as we fight against oppression
help us not to condemn the oppressor
nor to absolve the oppressed,
for judgement rests with you alone
who searches every heart and knows our innermost being.

P: We are forgiven people, freed to begin anew.

L: God, help us to respect that which remains unforgiven
and to understand it is there as a challenge
not to give up the struggle for justice
forgiveness has to become concrete in our lives.

P: We are forgiven people,
yet stand in need of forgiveness every day.
Amen.

Assurance of God's Mercy

L: Eternal God,
You have never ceased to call us back to you
and to each other,
even though we often resist your will
and do our own way.

Save us from the anxiety of guilt
that weighs us down,
from false repentance that does not lead to life,
and from the sin of taking your love for granted.

But teach us to know
that we are forgiven people,
freed to begin anew.
Give us a fresh vision of your purpose for us
and for the world.
And may the assurance of your forgiveness
make us more aware of the things that belong to our peace -
In Jesus name we pray.

P: Amen, Thanks be to God.

From Day 3 - Proclamation of the Word of Hope

Affirmation of Faith

L: We are not alone; we live in God's world.

P: We believe in God
who has created and is creating;
who has come in Jesus, to reconcile and make new.

L: We trust God
who calls us to be the Church;
to love and serve the whole of humanity;
to seek justice and resist evil;
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,
our judge and our hope.

P: In life, in death, in life beyond death,
God is with and in us.
We are not alone.
Thanks be to God.

From Day 4 - Affirmation of Faith

A Meditation on Walls

L: There are walls that divide one nation and people,
like Korea.

Ideological walls, built by big powers,
that make brothers and sisters
see each other as different, as enemies.

P: Lord, open our eyes
to see what walls imprison and divide.
Thank you for a faith
that struggles to break them down.

L: There are one-way walls between North and South.
Northern countries can enter the South
to invest and intervene - even to invade.
Southern countries face protectionist walls.
Northern walls rise higher and higher
against migrants and refugees.
There are walls between oppressed nations and people.
Old walls that they have inherited and chosen to retain.
New walls that they have built against each other.

P: Lord, open our eyes
to see what walls imprison and divide.
Thank you for a faith
that struggles to break them down.

L: There are walls
that churches compete with each other to build
to try to imprison and set limits
to God's saving power and grace.

There are walls too close to see
too painful for us to confront.
Between men and women, within families,
among friends and companions
in the struggle for justice, peace
and the integrity of creation.

P: Lord, open our eyes
to see what walls imprison and divide.
Thank you for a faith
that struggles to break them down.

L: What do we do about walls?
Acknowledge that they exist, and will not quickly disappear.
But if walls have been built by people,
people can also pull them down.

Perhaps not all at once
with a blast of trumpets as in Jericho,
but by creating enough breaches, enough openings
while digging deeper to understand
and undermine their foundations.

We thank God for walls that have fallen.
And for those whose faith kept struggling when walls seemed eternal,
whose blood marks where they gave their lives,
against the wall.

(Edicio de la Torre)

Speaking to the Children

A woman: Children of the earth
you girls and boys
with brown eyes and with blue,
you with the faces of wonder and expectation
each one of you a promise and an obligation
children of the earth, my children too.

A man: How many mothers and fathers
have carried you into life
Sometimes desperate themselves
because their own lives were crushed.
How many have done what they could
to protect and comfort you,
how many have watched through nights
of fears and tears,
have played with you and prayed with you
and sung you lullabies!

A woman: You ask us why we have
borne you into a world
where children have to die of hunger
where girls are forced to sell their bodies
to survive.
Where boys are sent to battlefields
to die for causes they do not even understand.
You ask us why we have stolen your souls
and given you things instead.
I am angry because we did not put you
into the world for that.

I want to keep the promise alive for you.

All: Children of the world, my children too.

A man: I am sad because you tell us
that we have ruined the world for you.
That there will not be a house of tomorrow
where you will be able to live in peace.
You will have to deal with the consequences
of our carelessness and greed.
You will have to pay for debts
you have not made.
And yet, we wanted so much to give you a better life
than what we have
You are asking us now
what is better?

A woman: We give you a mixed heritage
a heritage of hurt and problems
but also a heritage of hope and struggle.
I fight because I care
and I know that I am not alone.
The dress that I am wearing
reminds me of my sisters in many places
who struggle that the world may become
a kinder place to live in.
We are many, men and women
we take the thread of hope and resistance
from those who have lived before us
who walked in faith and humility behind our God
who died so that others may live.

We continue where they had to leave
we toil that the dreams may not be forgotten.
We will do our best to leave you a world
where you still can live.
But we also leave you
the privilege of struggling
to make it better, to undo our mistakes.

All: From generation to generation
in faith we continue to struggle and hope.

(Reinhild Traitler)

From Day 5 - Intercession

Prayer

L: For the darkness of waiting
of not knowing what is to come
of staying ready and quiet and attentive,
we praise you O God.

P: For the darkness and the light
are both alike to you.

L: For the darkness of staying silent
for the terror of having nothing to say
and for the greater terror
of needing to say nothing,
we praise you O God.

P: For the darkness and the light
are both alike to you.

L: For the darkness of loving
in which it is safe to surrender
to let go of our self-protection
and to stop holding back our desire,
we praise you O God

P: For the darkness and the light
are both alike to you.

L: For the darkness of choosing
when you give us the moment
to speak, and act, and change,
and we cannot know what we have set in motion,
but we still have to take the risk,
We praise you O God

P: For the darkness and the light
are both alike to you.

L: For the darkness of hoping
in a world which longs for you,
for the wrestling and the labouring of all creation
for wholeness and justice and freedom,
we praise you O God

P: For the darkness and the light
are both alike to you.
Amen.

A Liturgy for a Service of Covenanting

I. Call to worship (stand)

Leader: The time is coming -
indeed, it is here.
When the true worshippers
shall worship God in spirit and in truth.

P: God is spirit,
and those who worship God
should worship in spirit and in truth.

(Silence)

L: The work of the Lord surrounds us!

P: We respond with praise.

L: The love of the Lord is visible!

P: We respond in faith.

L: The wind of the spirit is blowing!

P: We respond with joy.

L: The word of the Lord is calling!

P: We respond in hope.

L: Eternal God -
Take hold of us as we meet together;
Kindle your love in our hearts;
Transform our vision to see things as you see them;
Give us faith to rise above ourselves;
And encourage us to dare for your kingdom.

P: For yours is the kingdom, the power and the glory now
and forever. Amen.

II. Hymn of Praise

(Sit)

III. Call to Commitment

"I am your God, and you are my people" says the Lord, "I will set my rainbow in the clouds as a sign of the covenant between me and you, and the earth and every living creature. When the rainbow is seen in the clouds I will remember my covenant ..." (Gen. 9).

Sisters and brothers, we have come together to make a common commitment for justice, peace and the integrity of creation. In so doing we also seek to make our own God's promises to us and to all creation, and to renew our commitment to God and to one another.

Our hope is not rooted in our own strength, but in the faithfulness of God. Let us, therefore, hear again God's promises to us as we read them in the Scripture.

IV. Scripture Readings

Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 55: 1-3

"Ho, every one who thirsts,
come to the waters;
and every one who has no money,
come, buy and eat!
Come, buy wine and milk
without money and without price.

Why do you spend your money
for that which is not bread,
and your labour for that which does not satisfy?
Hearken diligently to me,
and eat what is good,
and delight yourselves in fatness.

Incline your ear, and come to me;
hear, that your soul may live; and I will make with you
an everlasting covenant,
my steadfast, sure love for David."

Sung response: Gloria

Epistle Reading: **Rev. 21: 22-27, 22: 1-2**
And I saw no temple in the city,
for its temple is the lord God the Almighty
and the Lamb.
And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine upon it,
for the glory of God is its light,
and its lamp is the Lamb.

By its light shall the nations walk;
and the kings of the earth shall bring their glory into it,
and its gates shall never be shut by day -
and there shall be no night there;

They shall bring into it the glory and the honour of the nations.
But nothing unclean shall enter it,
nor anyone who practises abomination or falsehood,
but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life.

Then he showed me the river of the water of life,
bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and the Lamb
through the middle of the street of the city;
also, on either side of the river,
the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit,
yielding its fruit each month;
and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

Sung response: Gloria

Gospel Reading: **John 15: 12-17 (stand)**
"This is my commandment,
that you love one another as I have loved you.
No one has greater love than this,
to lay down one's life for one's friends.
You are my friends if you do what I command you.
No longer do I call you servants,
for the servant does not know what his master is doing;
but I have called you friends,
for all that I have heard from my Father
I have made known to you.
You did not choose me but I chose you
and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit
and that your fruit should abide;
so that whatever you ask the Father in my name,
he may give it to you.
This I command you, to love one another.

Sung response: Gloria

V. Affirmations (remain standing)

L: In a world that is marked by injustice and violence, we want to affirm God's promise of life to all creatures;
on the earth ravaged by human greed, we want to affirm that the earth is the Lord's.
We can make these affirmations only as we also acknowledge our own shortcomings and failures to commit ourselves to the reality of God's reign.
This commitment calls us to resist in thought, word and action everything that is against God's will for the creation.

1. Voice 1: The World belongs to God. **We affirm** that all forms of human power and authority are subject to
God, and accountable to people.

P: **This we affirm**

Voice 2. **We resist** the exercise of authority that monopolises power and prohibits transformation.

P: This we resist

All: **We commit** ourselves to the struggles of the people; to the search for just sharing of the
resources of the earth.

(silence)

2. Voice 1: **We affirm** God's special concern for the poor and the oppressed.

P: **This we affirm**

Voice 2: **We resist** the forces that create and perpetuate poverty: or accept it as inevitable or ineradicable.

P: **This we resist**

All: **We commit** ourselves to join all efforts that seek to eradicate exploitation and oppression.

(silence)

3. Voice 1: **We affirm** the rich plurality of God's creation; the equal value of very race, caste and ethnic group.

P: **This we affirm**

Voice 2: **We resist** the denial of rights to any racial, ethnic, caste or indigenous groups, and the exploitation of women and children.

P: **This we resist**

All: We commit ourselves to work against the forces of racism, ethnicism and casteism; to be in solidarity with the victims and their struggles.

(silence)

4. Voice 1: **We affirm** that male and female are created in the image of God.

P: This we affirm

Voice 2: **We resist** the structures of patriarchy that perpetuate violence against women; which excludes their full participation in Church and Society.

P: **This we resist**

All: **We commit** ourselves to seek ways of realising a new community of women and men.

(silence)

5. Voice 1: **We affirm** that access to truth and education, information and means of communication are basic human rights.

P: **This we affirm**

Voice 2: **We resist** policies that deny freedom of expression; that concentrate the communication power in the hands of the few.

P: **This we resist**

All: **We commit** ourselves to truth in communication; to enable the neglected and vulnerable to learn;

and the silenced to make themselves heard.

(silence)

6. Voice 1: **We affirm** God's peace; the establishment of justice; and the resolving of conflict by active non-violence.

P: **This we affirm**

Voice 2: **We resist** doctrines of national security based on the use of weapons of mass destruction,
military interventions, and occupations.

P: **This we resist**

All: **We commit** ourselves to the banning of warfare as a means of resolving conflicts; to non-violence
in personal relationships and the creation of an international legal order of peacemaking.

(silence)

7. Voice 1: **We affirm** that creation, as God's handiwork, has its own integrity.

P: **This we affirm**

Voice 2: **We resist** the attitude to creation which treats it only as a resource for human exploitation.

P: **This we resist**

All; **We commit** ourselves to respect the rights of future generations; to conserve, and to work for the
integrity of creation.

(silence)

8. Voice 1: **We affirm** that the earth belongs to God.

P: **This we affirm**

Voice 2: **We resist** all human greed that makes land a commodity, which denies the bonds between
land and people; which devastates the earth for profit.

P: **This we resist**

All: **We commit** ourselves to protect the rights of indigenous peoples to land and sea; to respect the rights of other creatures for ecological space.

(silence)

9. Voice 1: **We affirm** the dignity of all children; the role of young people in building a new society.

P: **This we affirm**

Voice 2: **We resist** authority that abuses, violates or exploits children and young people

P: **This we resist**

All: **We commit** ourselves to support young people in their struggle for self-actualization and to defend the right of children to live in dignity.

(silence)

10. Voice 1: **We affirm** that human rights are God-given and that their promotion and protection are essential for freedom, justice and peace.

P: **This we affirm**

Voice 2: **We resist** all systems and structures that violate human rights; that tolerate torture, disappearances, extra-judicial executions and death penalty.

P: **This we resist**

All: **We commit** ourselves to be in solidarity with peoples and movements that seek to integrate those with disabilities into society; those who struggle to promote and protect human rights.

VI. **Hymn** (stand)

VII. **Covenanting for life in its fullness** (sit)

L: Sisters and brothers
Let us now prepare ourselves
to enter into a covenanting solidarity
on the matters of life and death in our day.

"I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day"
we read in the scripture,
"that I have set before you life and death,
blessing and curse.
Therefore choose life
that you and your descendants may live" (Deut; 30,19)

LET US COVENANT TOGETHER TO CHOOSE LIFE

(stand)

L: **We commit ourselves to work and to engage our churches to work: for a just economic order on local national regional and international levels for all people; for liberation from bondage to the foreign debt that affects the lives of hundreds of millions of people.**

P: We who live by the love, grace, and forgiveness of God,
whose lives are sustained by God's faithfulness,
bind ourselves to each other in a mutual covenant.
May God who witnesses our commitment
to stand together
also give us the grace to fulfil it
Amen
So let it be.

L: **We commit ourselves to work and to engage our churches to work: for the true security of all nations and peoples; for the demilitarisation of international relations; against militarism and national security doctrines and systems; for a culture of non-violence as a force for change and liberation.**

P: We who live by the love, grace and forgiveness of God,
whose lives are sustained by God's faithfulness,
bind ourselves to each other in a mutual covenant.
May God who witnesses our commitment
to stand together
also give us the grace to fulfil it.

Amen
So let it be.

L: **We commit ourselves to work, and to engage our churches to work: for building a culture that can live in harmony**

with creation's integrity;
for preserving the gift of the earth's atmosphere to nurture and sustain the world's life;
For combating the causes of destructive changes to the atmosphere which threaten to disrupt the earth's climate and create widespread suffering.

P: We who live by the love, grace and forgiveness of God,
whose lives are sustained by God's faithfulness,
bind ourselves to each other in a mutual covenant.
May God who witnesses our commitment
to stand together
also give us the grace to fulfil it.

Amen
So let it be.

L: **We commit ourselves to work, and engage our churches to work: for the eradication of racism and discrimination on national and international levels for all people;**
for the breaking down of walls which divide people because of their ethnic origin;
for the dismantling of the economic, political and social patterns of behaviour that perpetuate and allow individuals to consciously and unconsciously perpetuate the sin of racism.

P: We who live by the love, grace and forgiveness of God,
whose lives are sustained by God's faithfulness,
bind ourselves to each other in a mutual covenant.
May God who witnesses our commitment
to stand together
also give us the grace to fulfil it.

Amen
So let it be.

VIII. A Symbolic Act of Solidarity
(Choose an example out of your local context).

IX. Prayer for Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation

I. O God, who yourself are justice
and create justice
through your Son, Jesus Christ,

We thank you
that you let us share in your justice
and make us just before you.
We thank you
that despite all our unfaithfulness you do not let us go
and that you establish justice where injustice prevails.
You have taken the side of the poor and of all those
who have no rights or whose rights are trampled
underfoot.
Forgive us our hesitations, our blindness, our deafness.
Do not let the stream of your righteousness run dry,
we pray you.
Make us hunger for justice.
Take away our concern for ourselves
and our selfishness.
Give us the strength to share
so that all may be filled.
Teach us your purpose for us
till your Kingdom of justice comes.

II. O God, who yourself are peace
and create peace
through your Son, Jesus Christ,
We thank you that you are our peace.
We thank you that despite our inability to live in peace,
you do not let us go.
You have said: Blessed are the peacemakers.
You took our hatred and our intransigence
with you to the Cross,
so that out of it reconciliation may grow.
Forgive us our anxious concern for our own security
which is unable to relinquish the power to threaten.
Let us be co-workers in the building of your peace,
we pray you.
Tear down the walls of separation.
Show us the promise of non-violence.
Take away our fear of the stranger
in whom you come to meet us.
Transform hatred into love.
Grant that we may see our enemies in a new light
and that we may learn
your purpose for us
till your kingdom of peace comes.

III. O God, who created community among us
through your Son, Jesus Christ,
his blood has made us one body,
dependent on one another,
linked to one another
so that we may help one another.
We thank you
that you love us as your people.
Through our selfishness we have divided the world.
Our churches are separated from one another.
We cannot take your Supper together.
Forgive us our sins.
Make us instruments of your covenant,
your covenant which is community
and which demands solidarity.
Grant us signs of unity.
Heal our broken relationships
through justice in peace for the whole creation.
Give us the strength
to follow you and be witnesses to your fellowship
when other powers and loyalties divide us.
You alone are our God,
our Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer.
Teach us your purpose for us
that we may believe and live in reconciliation
till the coming of your Kingdom which is community.

X. Celebration

L: Let us greet each other and celebrate the covenant
we have entered into and afterwards go out in peace
to continue our celebration with an agape meal.

May God's love enfold us:
may God's faithfulness sustain us
and may God's peace fill our hearts
as we seek to serve God and all God's people.

XI. Introduction to the *Agape* Meal

L: Brothers and sisters in Christ,
We entered into covenant solidarity
We have given ourselves to each other and to God.
We have taken steps towards God's new creation
of justice and peace.

Since the journey ahead is long and hard
we take these moments to receive nourishment
to give thanks,
to support one another,
and to celebrate God's work in our midst.
Let us eat together
to savour the love we share.
We are not alone here. God is with us.
Surrounded by God's love we pray.

Merciful God,
who gave manna in the wilderness,
and flowing springs from the rock,
with this bread and water
strengthen us for the tasks ahead
so that all your children may at last find
the food which satisfies
and the living water which quenches all thirst,
through Jesus Christ.

P: Amen.

L: Let us share the bread and water.

XII. Blessing

II. MEDITATIONS AND SERMONS

"O lord, how manifold are thy works!"

(Sermon at the Opening Worship in Seoul)

Marga Bührig
Switzerland

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

During our worship we have heard God the Creator praised in the verses from Psalm 104. In vivid language, everything we can see and feel has been brought into relation with God. The light in and by which we live is God's garment, the winds are God's messengers, and fire and flame are God's ministers. We have heard that water is part of God's creation, and gives life to plants and animals, besides being a necessity of life for us humans. Reading on beyond the verses we have just heard, we become aware of the rhythm of creation. The moon, waxing and waning, marks the seasons of the year and the sun rising and setting creates the rhythm of day and night. The riches and variety of God's creation are praised:

> O Lord, how manifold are thy works!
> In wisdom hast thou made them all;
> the earth is full of thy creatures
> and these all look to thee (v.27).

A woman friend of mine reread the whole of this psalm after a longish interval and then quite spontaneously said: "That's a great fabric in which everything is interwoven. All things living depend on God and on each other and can't get along without each other. They draw life from each other and live in company with each other." This morning we have come together on the first full day of our Convocation to have that experience, to tell it to each other and to hear God's voice in everything and sing God's praise. It is a gift to be able to do that together in all our diversity as women and men, children, young people, adults and old people, with different colours of skin and different cultures, breaking through all confessional, political and economic barriers. Let us also do it joyfully.

Nevertheless I think I am not alone in also having difficulties with this praise of God. When I read in the psalm about springs gushing forth, it makes me remember the streams of my childhood days, yet I cannot forget that today I am warned not to drink water from the tap where I live because too many chemicals have been added. Or again I think of the many women and children in other parts of the world who have to walk long distances every day to fetch water. I think of places where there is only one tap for many families who have to live packed closely together, while a few hundred metres away tourists are wasting water. I think of the many rivers in highly industrialized countries which are so polluted that they are poisoning the seas, and of lakes and rivers which are drying up because too much water has been drawn off from them to generate power.

The psalm talks about the variety and the riches of creation, and I think of how many species of animals and plants have died out, not because of natural developments which have always existed, but as a result of ruthless human intervention. Nor should we forget in all this the human beings, tribes and races which have been annihilated! How can we praise God in creation after colonialism and in the very midst of a process of economic neocolonialism? How can we praise God after Bhopal, Sandoz-Schweizerhalle, Chernobyl and the ongoing felling of the tropical rain forests? This question becomes even more acute when we look farther back in our century and mention Hiroshima and Nagasaki and Auschwitz. Here the annihilation of human beings was planned and carried out deliberately. Many people lost faith in a loving God because of the impression this made, and so I ask once again,, how can we still praise God today?

One thing seems certain to me: we cannot go back into the age when our psalm was written. It is true that even then creation was not as it had left God's hands, but human beings did not have the degree of power at their command that we have now. In the light of what has happened, is still happening and could yet happen, we cannot sing the praise of creation and of the Creator with the same undisturbed naïvete and joy. Everywhere we go we take our knowledge with us and yet it remains true that we cannot be truly human without the note of praise to God and the profound joy in the fullness and beauty of creation, without the longing for justice and integrity. That is to say, without the love for life which as the psalmist says is repeatedly renewed through God's Spirit or breath (cf. verse 30 RSV), in so far as we take "living" to be more than merely existing. How do we deal with these facts? In my own life and environment my experience has been that when we realize the violence done to creation and suffer from that violence a new feeling of solidarity arises, a new capacity to hold living creatures in esteem, a new recognition that we too as women and men with our bodies and senses and gift of perceiving, loving and understanding, are part of this creation.

In this connection I should like to quote two of our contemporaries, a woman from my own cultural area and a man from another part of the world, an American Indian. The latter, George Tinker, a Christian theologian, said in a lecture: "...the affirmation of God's act of Creation and the sacredness of all that has been created necessarily results in respect for one another in relationships marked first of all by justice and ultimately in relationships of harmony and balance that are a true experience of peace". And Dorothee Sölle, the German theologian, in her book To Work and to Love describes her experience with a blooming magnolia bush in the midst of the "grey monotony" of Broadway in New York. She tells how she observes "its varying hues" and the movement of its blossoms in the wind and is involved in their life, and goes on to say that with her "growing sense of this magnolia's beauty comes her own growth" and that she has changed since she knew it.

Of course, it is not the magnolia itself which makes this change happen, but living along with it, the interrelation of life with life in the framework of God's creation. This brings us again very close to what has just been said about all things in God's creation belonging together. The question remains which way this new appreciation of creation leads us to a romantic backwards look which makes us shut our eyes to injustice and violence or to new forms of responsibility, to resistance on behalf of life and therefore also of justice and peace? I am convinced that the only way for us Christians is the second way. If we learn to love God's creation afresh, we shall recognize the extent to which unjust economic and political structures contribute to its destruction and how much these structures lead in turn to new injustice and discord. Injustice towards human beings, discord and the violation of nature, all affect each other. This vicious circle can be broken only through God's love. Justice and peace will increase where relations are restored in that love and in terms of the Kingdom of God relations between human beings and peoples and between human beings and the earth. The biblical word shalom includes all these aspects: healing, wholeness, wellbeing and justice for everyone all-embracing peace. Shalom is God's eschatological gift, but also God's commission to us.

Let us return to our psalm and ask where we human beings are to be found in it. Verse 20 describes how the night comes on and how the animals "creep forth" during the night. When dawn comes they go back into their dens and then we read :

> "Man goes forth to his work
> and to his labour until the evening." (v. 23)

No special stress is laid on the fact that we really are part of creation but it is only of human beings that it is said they have to work. Work has many faces in the world of today and no doubt very few of them correspond to what is

meant here by work: that we human beings can and should become actively involved in God's creation. We can tend it and maintain it and open up latent possibilities in it but we can also exploit and destroy it. In an address on the subject matter of JPIC, Lois Wilson from Canada, my co-president in the WCC, has said that we are placed in God's creation as gardeners and stewards and not set over it as overlords. I find it tragic that the very Christian tradition that raised humanity so high above the rest of creation has been the one that has contributed substantially to the destruction of creation. The knowledge that has led not only to mastery of the earth but also to the possibility of destroying all life on this planet developed among peoples with roots which were originally Christian. We must find our way back to these roots and we may be helped to do so by the recollection that our work was and is intended to be and actually is care for life. Hence the words "integrity of creation" German translates this as the -preservation of creation - as part of our theme here. We shall have to discover together what this means in practice today, and we may well discover to our horror that the integrity of creation has been so gravely impaired that we can do nothing to restore it that much damage is irreversible. Consequently our longing for the "new heaven and new earth" which we have been promised will grow, but hopefully so will the will to care for life and to resist violent destruction with all the powers of our reason, our hands and our hearts as God intended.

But is that all? Do human beings appear only once in the psalm? Indeed they do, and yet I should like to say, No, they do not. It is true they are mentioned specifically only once but in another way they we are present throughout the whole psalm. This psalm was composed, prayed and sung by human beings and we appear in it as those who can address another Being as "you" or "thou" (RSV). Listen once again to the beginning of the psalm:

> ...my God, thou art very great. (v. 1)

or:

> how manifold are thy works! (v. 24)

or:

> These all look to thee (v. 27)

or:

> thou renewest the face of the ground (30).

Again and again the direct form of address breaks through the mere description of creation. We are created to say Thou and to say it both to God and to each other. This capacity for relating is at the very core of our life. God has created us as partners in the covenant, has addressed each of us as "thou" and allowed us in turn to address God thus. Already in this Old Testament psalm we find this is so, and through its renewal by Jesus Christ this covenant has been made more profound. Through his human, healing companionship with us, through his suffering and dying, his being broken

against the power of political and religious leaders, through his rising again, we are empowered afresh to believe in life and love and to resist the power of death in hope. We are called to live and to love, and that is the reason for praising God. Dear brothers and sisters, let us put into practice this praise of God in creation and this love of life during these days, resisting all powers of destruction and death. May God the Creator the Sustainer and the Liberator help us to do so. May God the Father the Son and the Holy Spirit help us to do so. Amen.

Are there "Dream Lines" back to Eden?

An Aboriginal Australian Presentation on JPIC

Anne PattelGray
Australia

In the beginning, God created the world. In the centre was a small island rich in food, vegetation, minerals, and life. To the rest of the world, the creatures there seemed very unusual, because the humans that inhabited this world were Black. They were a very spiritual people. They had Dreaming stories, telling of their deep spirituality, and one of the stories speaks of a great white spirit that came and walked this land at the beginning of time. (In this case, white is not referring to the colour of the skin, but to the spirit world because in our culture white signifies death.) This great white spirit then handed down to my ancestors the laws which we were to follow. This great white spirit believed to be God, and our laws, are as close to us as the Bible. We were to share everything equally; we were to love our sisters and brothers; we were not to steal; we were to care for the land, and to respect every living thing. So, in general, these people were very loving, caring, and sharing people.

For 40,000 years, these people lived in peace and harmony with the land, maintaining God's integrity for the land. Until one day, 1788, came the invasion of the white man. My people at first were welcoming to these great white spirits because they had never seen a white person. Therefore, they were in awe at seeing a white person. They were not to know that this would become a living nightmare for them, which would last more than 200 years. As more and more Europeans came to this land, the Aboriginal people soon realized that they would lose their land as they got shoved further and further back into the centre. The white man brought with him great evil magic in the form of:

smallpox
poison
measles
venereal diseases
bullets

gunpowder

These the Aboriginal people found their medicine could not combat. They took up their wooden spears and war weapons to start fighting back because they soon realized that they would have to fight if they wanted to survive. Over 600,000 of my people died from:-

having their water holes poisoned;
being ambushed and hundreds being shot at a time;
being infected with smallpox, therefore wiping out whole tribes of my people;
women and children being raped and sexually abused;
men having their penises cut off;
babies being buried up to their necks in the sand and then having their heads kicked off...

All this because the white man was destroying God's creation, and the Aboriginals' livelihood. The white man cleared forests, dug up the land to make roads, brought strange animals such as cows and sheep to the land which devastated the countryside so much that the native animals soon had nothing to eat themselves. They carved out farms, cattle stations, and sheep stations. Their greed and their lust for power became more destructive as they discovered things like gold, coal, and uranium. My people became more and more distressed at the sight of the white men raping, murdering, and abusing their Mother Earth through mining. We knew the price they would pay for abusing the Mother Earth. We knew there would soon be floods, drought, earthquakes, and famine because Mother Earth had to retaliate in the only possible way that she knew how.

The white man then found that he needed labourers to work his farms, so the next best thing which would not cost him any money, was to round up "the natives" to work the land which then became slave labour. So as to make this process more organised, they then rounded up my people and placed them on "reserves" and in "missions". To hide their shame at creating fatherless children, they took only the Aboriginal children with light skin and placed them in the missions. This was done through the church and the governments in completing the genocide. These children were forcibly taken from their mothers and in some cases never finding their mothers again. For example, the case of Russel Moore (known to whites as James Savage) who is currently being tried for murder in Melbourne, Florida, USA. He was taken from his mother at four days old, then adopted by a white Salvation Army minister and his wife. For five years, Russel constantly was moved around Australia as a Salvation Army minister fulfilled his different posts of ministry. At the age of five, he was then taken out of the country to the United States of America. Then for seven years, he was again constantly moved around the

USA. Through this trial, we heard that Russel was mentally and physically abused by his "so-called" adopted parents. His pet name, given to him by the Reverend, was "nigger". For many Sundays, Russel had to stand outside the church underneath the tree, while the Reverend held morning worship. At the age of twelve, Russel was then abandoned and left in the United States as his "so-called" adopted parents returned to Australia. He then found himself alone, frightened, on the streets, with no one he could relate to because he was not Native American Indian nor Black American nor Hispanic. He therefore found it very hard to feel that he had a common ground with any of these people. In order to survive, Russel just like anyone else took up a life of crime and this also led to a drug addiction. Now at the age of twenty six facing the death penalty, Russel finally gets to meet his natural mother and with this comes his people, his identity, his culture. Russel for the first time knows what it feels like "to belong". Just as Russel is being tried for his crime, who is going to pay for the injustices which were placed on Russel in 26 years of "life"? So, many Aboriginal children were forcibly taken from their mothers and placed into missions to be trained to become second-class whites, their only purpose being to serve the whites.

So, even today in 1990, we the Aboriginals still fight for justice for the truth to be told: about our land, our culture, our Sacred Sites, and our basic human rights.

Over the years, we have fought to maintain our sovereign rights as the Indigenous People of this land. We still fight against the destruction of our land and the abuse to our Mother Earth, and on a wider scale, we now believe the world is also starting to see what their destruction has done to our Mother Earth. As the Indigenous People of this land, we fight for our rights to be heard, to have access to our Sacred Sites, to maintain and participate in our cultural ceremonies, and to have our spirituality recognized; and, for the survival of the many generations which are yet to follow. We the Aboriginals of Australia lift up our voices and cry: **"We have survived!"**

As believers in God, should we not be taking up our swords for justice, peace and the integrity of creation? Aren't some of us guilty of abusing God's creation, of raping it, pillaging it for our own purposes? Have we not stolen the land from indigenous people, therefore causing their oppression in our lust for riches and power? I feel the time is coming for humankind to pay a price for all the injustices it has served on God's creation. If we are to be committed to justice, peace and the integrity of God's creation, what **action** are we taking to maintain the integrity of creation?

A testimony of suffering

Zohra Azirou
Algeria and France

Why did you leave your country?

My friends at CIMADE asked me to add an Algerian woman's voice to this concert of future prospects and hopes.

It gives me pleasure to do so, and I am honoured to be speaking to you here at this world convocation.

I should like, if I may, to dedicate my contribution to a man who was ahead of his times that man is my father. Illiterate himself, he nonetheless inspired in his 10 children the will to be free men and women living with dignity and respect.

I did not choose my situation as a migrant woman; it was forced on me by circumstances. I arrived in France with my family in 1957 when the Algerian war was at its height. I was then six years old. My parents were forced into exile for political and economic reasons. I shall not dwell on the miserable side of life we have all experienced as immigrants. What I really want to tell you is that so long as men or women retain their dignity they will still have hope. But we who had fled the occupiers' bombs found ourselves on our arrival in France facing anti-Algerian racism on an unprecedented scale.

Certain points of reference are essential to understand our history. Geographically, my country is situated in the north of the continent of Africa. Between it and the west there is a natural frontier in the form of the Mediterranean Sea. Was it created to join or to separate peoples? History, alas, has the answer. When France under Charles X landed at Sidi-Ferruch it was following on the heels of Christian Spain.

Any colonial undertaking is bound up with the clash of religions and cultures. This was the spirit which prompted France's occupation of Algeria in 1830. Yet there were no signs up saying "For Sale" or "To Let". Throughout their history the people of Algeria refused to submit. Again and again they took up the fight with the scant means at their disposal and reacted against the colonial regime.

The objective at that time was purely and simply the subjugation of the indigenous population by means of a thousand injustices and acts of persecution. One instance of this is the Decree of Cremieux of 1870 which granted French citizenship to the Jews of Algeria while reducing the people of Algeria to subject status. The colonization was highly successful and that in turn attracted a large influx of Alsatians in 1872.

Yet the writings of the time testify to the good will of the Algerians and their willingness to coexist in harmony with the French. To take only 1931, just after the centenary celebrations of the conquest of Algeria, what the "natives", as they were called, were asking for was simply equal rights with the Europeans. But the central government in Paris did not see it that way.

For more than a century the French had been taught in school that Algeria was a department of France, simply an extension of the French mainland. In those same primary schools Algerian children learned that their ancestors were Gauls. In line with a certain way of thinking these children were practically excluded from secondary schooling, for a thousand reasons which I leave you to guess.

I am not here to give you a history lesson; I shall say only this: when a people has had enough of humiliation and contempt it will raise its head and organize. This was the situation that led to a war without quarter between France and Algeria from 1954 to 1962, when Algeria gained its independence. Both sides mourned their dead. In Algeria the stocktaking began. The situation was grim: the survivors faced a lunar landscape. Bruised in body, reduced to poverty in their own land, the people of Algeria had to cope. But how can you reconstruct a country when the vast majority of its people had no education either professional or political and were practically illiterate.

This is why my country today belongs to what are politely called "developing countries".

As regards your suffering, some people no doubt say to you: "so why don't you go home and fight there?"

Life is not easy for immigrants. Their daily life is made up of suffering and the difficulties are endless: low wages, poor housing, loneliness. And some people will say "They should go back where they belong they're free now!" But the thing is, one regime goes and another takes over. The Algerian revolution was hijacked by the political set up after independence.

It wasn't possible for us to go home. Most of the postwar immigrants had a job in France, badly paid, certainly, but they made do with very little because their situation was growing more and more precarious. They were caught in

a trap. Our parents' generation was the silent generation a labour force and nothing more, they could say nothing on political or trade union issues.

Then rather than just putting up with things yet again, people decided to plan for the future. We can say there are three kinds of people:

- The pessimists first, faced with the difficulties of the times, fear the constraints will be permanent.

- The optimists, on the other hand, think they are only temporary and it is enough if they "grin and bear it".

- Then there are the realists who see the present upheavals as an opportunity and know that they will have a role to play in this context.

Where the pessimists see only a threat, the optimists will see opportunities and the realists will put them into practice.

My testimony is for those realists. I testify for all those women and men who want events to move forward as a result of their action and their commitment in everyday life. But even then they have to have the necessary means that is, the changes call for people who are motivated but also for the necessary institutions which will enable them to take charge of their own affairs. We are living in difficult times; and in addition we have the rise of fundamentalism, whether religious or political, in several continents.

France, for example, has had the fever since 1983 and the diagnosis is racism. In fact, the temperature has risen so high that it has caused convulsions: the extreme right party of Jean-Marie Le Pen won more than 10% of the votes in the municipal elections in the town of Dreux in the same year. Since then the movement has been growing steadily and has even managed to establish itself on the French political scene.

How do you see Europe? What struggles are you engaged in at present to bring Europe to recognize this multi-cultural situation?

With our French friends, CIMADE in particular, we have regular meetings and activities when we can reflect together, also with people of different nationalities, on how to check this phenomenon and enable mutual understanding to develop among all concerned in short to exercise tolerance. As someone has said, "better to light a lamp than to curse the dark". But as this century draws to a close, the troubles of the immigrants are far from over.

Whereas in the 19th century Europe meant colonial Europe from which we were clearly excluded, today the talk is of western Europe and it seems we are still not concerned. Are we to conclude that history eternally repeats itself? We reject that fatalistic view, just as we do the ghetto view of Europe. As foreigners we see two major features in the Europe which is developing today:

Firstly, the majority society composed of people who are supposedly of "true" European origin.

Secondly, the minority society referring of course to non-European immigrants.

Thirdly, being female we also refuse to be the victims of this three-tier system which would make us the pariahs of modern times. Why three-tier, you may ask. Because there are three forms of exclusion: The first is the fact of coming from a so-called developing country by that I mean the very negative view generally held of us and our countries. The second is the fact of being an immigrant, about which I have already told you. The third is the fact of being a woman, with all the prejudices that implies at all levels.

We demand the right to participate in this world in movement, because it concerns us too. Immigrants are in fact involved in every area of society and participate actively in the life of this France which they love and where they have chosen to live with their families. Despite the impression conveyed by sections of the press and media, they share the same values as their French friends. The first duty of a journalist is to inform not to disinform. Journalists should respect the ethics of their profession, but unfortunately they frequently blot their copybooks, sometimes seriously.

As for the North Africans living in France today, a great majority of them are there to stay, as the politicians know though they pretend not to. Because no measures appropriate to their situation are taken, public opinion thinks those foreigners cannot be integrated. We, who are immigrants in France, live in the country where human rights were born; sometimes, it is true, we have our doubts.

The politicians cannot go on closing their eyes. Europe is and will continue to be multi-cultural; that is the reality they have to live with. Recent events in the East about which we are delighted will certainly change North-South relations. Vigilance is needed so that each continent can take control of its own development and co-operation between the developing countries, and the industrialized countries can be as harmonious as possible.

Organizations for the defence of human rights urgently need to bring pressure to bear on governments to take the necessary measures to ensure

that the foreigners living on their territory cease to be treated as scapegoats by a society sick with its own problems. By "measures" we mean: the right to vote in municipal elections, since we are not exempt from paying local taxes. This right to vote would enable us to gain recognition and hence respect.

Certain politicians would have to change their language during their electoral campaigns. We will be seen as voters and not as parasites, as some call us today. I would remind you that immigrants already take part to a limited degree in French political life because since 1972 they have been able to vote and stand for election as staff representatives and members of works councils. Since 1982 they have been able to elect members to the Industrial Tribunal. In 1983 they took part in the election of representatives to the Administrative Council of the Social Security Fund.

It is time, I think, to put our cards on the table. The political right to vote, in the widest possible sense, is the last bastion between us and citizenship.

By agreeing to this demand France will show that it has the will to encourage integration. We want to live in a mature France that recognizes and assumes responsibility for its past, for we share a common memory and we are old travelling companions even if our relations have not always been as cordial as they might have been.

Let me end my testimony with a philosophical quotation borrowed from Saint-Exupery, which I would ask you to think about: "If you are different from me, my brother, you do me no wrong, you enrich me".

Thank you.

A testimony of suffering

Felix N. Sugirtharaj
India

I grew up in a *Pariah* or outcaste village near Madras, South India. It was in the year 1949, two years after the Independence of India, I was walking to a Higher Secondary School which was about two kilometres from the outcaste village where my parents lived. I saw a huge crowd near my school. The school was situated in an upper caste Hindu town since only caste Hindus were rich and owned land and the outcastes were not allowed to walk through the streets of the upper caste Hindu landlords with *chappals* (shoes). To my amazement, I found a middleaged landless labourer from my outcaste village who was literally beaten by the youth of the upper caste Hindu village. I enquired what was the matter. My school teacher, an upper caste Hindu who was enjoying the manhandling, told me that the Harijan labourer deserves punishment because he walked with chappals before the house of the President of the village Panchayat (council) who happened to be the most rich and wealthy landlord owning vast stretches of rice yielding land. The outcaste by the name of Kariyan (a Black man) had committed the unforgivable crime of walking boldly with chappals on the streets of the caste village to avoid the heat on the ground.

India became independent on August 15, 1947. Then the Constitution Assembly of Independent India passed a provision legally abolishing untouchability on November 29th, 1948, nine months after the death of Mahatma Gandhi, the father of our Nation who fought not only for freedom from the British, but also for the abolition of untouchability.

Can the untouchables or the outcastes say "Good! This man Gandhi has liberated us to humaness" No, not at all! I am talking to you after 43 years of India's Independence! We still have the rigid caste system existing in India in a ruthless form. The outcastes or the untouchables are still the victims of all kinds of injustices! Till today they are not allowed into the upper caste villages with decent clothes and shoes. Temple entry to untouchables is still not possible. Upper caste Hindus often raid the outcaste villages, burn the huts of the poor, and kill the household mercilessly and rape women in fury.

The Hindus derive their caste theory (*Jati*) from their scriptures on the basis of *varnasramsharma* (Divine Coloured Division). The Indian society, they feel, should be divided according to this divinely ordained caste hierarchy. Brahmins were supposed to have been born out of the head of the Lord Brahma and became Priestly caste with all wisdom and knowledge, the *Kshatriyas* out of Brahma's shoulders and thus warriors, the *Vysya* out of Brahma's stomach and thus became traders and the *Shudras* of Brahma's legs and thus are peasants.

The *Harijans* or the outcastes do not belong to the four caste hierarchy and thus called as *Panchamas* the fifth caste. The fifth caste, which was not divinely ordained, is cursed and debased as *Chandalas* the unwanted. The law of *varna* (colour) prescribes that a person should follow the lawful occupation of his forefathers . The fifth caste, though it does not exist in the Hindu scriptures, is said to be the unclean, or polluted and the people of this cast are called to be scavengers or sweepers those who clean the toilets and the streets. Gandhi fought against untouchability without eradicating the caste system. It was only Dr.-Ambedkar who not only proclaimed that the caste system was an evil force in the Indian society, but also fought for equal rights of the untouchables in India. It was Ambedkar who rejected the Gandhian word "Harijan" for the outcastes and coined a new word called Dalit. Which means broken or crushed or bruised Ambedkar went to the extent of claiming preAryan status to the untouchables in India.

Today we witness a resurgence of fundamentalism, parochialism, chauvinism, communalism and more significantly an intensification of caste conflicts very often taking the form of the most heinous and brutal crimes against the *Dalits*. This is a consequence of the growing caste consolidation in the countryside.

The counter revolutionary violence by the agrarian interests is to perpetuate their age old caste domination in the face of the rising challenge of awakening oppressed masses namely *Dalits*.

The *Dalits* in India are more than 350 million and most of them belong to the rural work force which is not yet organised. The most brutal part of this counter-revolutionary violence, is seen in the general loss of civilised values increasing number of rape and molestation of *Dalit* and tribal women in various parts of the country.

Because of this all round crisis, conflict and confrontation, the State is assuming an increasingly repressive and authoritarian character, which extends from enactment of various repressive laws, expansion of police and paramilitary forces and building up of a huge military apparatus. Under the protection of the state apparatus the capitalist and landed interests in different

parts of the country are building up their own decentralised and private methods of control to confront and repress the militant protest movements of the masses most often in violation of the proclaimed legal norms in connivance with the judiciary.

Concrete historical questions are posed before all activists in a specific and practical manner:

(a) How to protect the democratic rights of the toiling people especially the *Dalits*?

(b) How to resist the increasing onslaught of the reactionary, authoritarian, proimperialist forces?

(c) How to evaluate emerging mass agitations and name them People's Movements?

(d) How to oppose divisive, diversionary, deviationist forces?

(e) How to translate these happenings into practical realities that are consistent with national perspectives ?

(f) How to locate allies at all levels? Who will support the grassroot movements of the *Dalits*?

I can boldly say that as an activist living with the *Dalits*, I have learnt little by little a strong and beautiful truth: "The Christian faith does not separate us from the world, but it immerses us wholly in it".

Some of us who are struggling and suffering courageously in popular movements and living and celebrating our faith in poor communities are also communicating the Good News of God through our deeds. We believe that some of us have committed ourselves sufficiently to the poor. Commitment to the poor and oppressed and enabling the rise of the grass roots communities is what we call the liberation of the oppressed. The poor challenge the society constantly summoning it to conversion and many of the poor incarnate in their lives the evangelical virtues of solidarity, service and simplicity.

It would become a unique experience for us to see that the poor could find in the People's movements a source of hope and support in their struggle for liberation. The *Dalit* Landless Agricultural Labourers movement (a registered Labour union) which was founded by *Dalit* unorganised landless men and women through our constant efforts of conscientisation and mobilisation, has a membership of fifteen thousand spread in three northern

districts of Tamilnadu today. SocioPolitical activists have had to live in the poor *Dalit* villages from 1979 onwards to liberate these oppressed from caste harassment and economic bondage. New leaders have been trained to organise rallies, hunger strikes and protest marches which lead to strengthening their labour union and increase grassroot participation, bargaining power and militancy of the union members. The power structure, including the state machinery, realize that the union of the *Dalit* labourers is a threatening factor and a force to reckon with.

The union went to the extent of boycotting the last Parliamentary elections declaring that their labour would vote only if the depressed class lands in each village was being redeemed from the rich caste hierarchy and distributed to the poor *Dalits* at once. The union members demanded for the speedy implementation of the Minimum Wages Act and interim relief for the drought victims. Harassment, illegal detention, fabrication of false cases against union leaders have been repressive mechanism of the Police and the State to contain the union activities.

Yet, the movement grows stronger and stronger day by day. The marginalised the so called poor - are no more part of a silent culture. A new consciousness of resistance and the consolidation of all the oppressed classes can be seen as the signs of hope for the future. The *Dalits*, the tribals, the women and other weaker sections have developed immense resources emerging out of their ongoing struggle to bring out a radical reversal of their socioeconomic and political status. The new values and a sort of cultural reawakening are bringing about a new *koinonia*, a healing and caring community which can sustain itself from any onslaught irrespective of demoniac forces which are at work against them.

We believe that the gospel is a two edged sword, for it hacks away the hypocrisy, greed and injustice of the powerful on the one hand and cuts down the lethargy, apathy and the hopelessness of the oppressed on the other hand.

When the poor are able to turn towards truth, in large numbers, a lot more theology is required not only to motivate, but also to sustain the movement of the people. Today it looks that the poor have no voice yet they will not remain just like that for long. The meaning of the resurrection is power it is the power of God to set the oppressed free so that they would realize the potentials of the new life in Christ.

For Jesus the poor becane a unique organising centre of a new historical force which spearheaded the new age that dawned on them. They were the new people of God bearing the marks of the crucifixion, death and resurrection of Jesus, which symbolised suffering, death and new life.

The resurrection of Jesus and its liberating and conquering power were experienced not only by an accidental group of people but by those whom Jesus had identified as poor, oppressed, weak people who had completely put their future and hopes in God.

A testimony of suffering

Sr. Naoko Iyori MMB
The Philippines

Sometimes the suffering has no voice, it is silent.
It is a question of survival, and the poor have no choice.

The story I am about to relate is a composite of the actual experiences of several women from the Philippines. Some of them I have known personally. I will share all of them with you. Right now it is AIDS. That's right, HIV. I am a carrier the doctor told me. That settles my future, wouldn't you say? I don't think you will like my story, but please listen to it anyway.

The first name I remember was BABY. That is what my mother and father called me. We were a pioneer farming family just north of Tagum in the Island of Mindanao in the Philippines. My father actually created our farm from nothing. He was just making a success of it when suddenly without warning the Philippine National Army came and forced us to leave our farm. To "protect" us from the NPA (New People's Army) we were made to take everything we could carry and move to a "strategic village". We learned very quickly what the word "hamletting" means! There was no village at all, and after building a barracks for the military we had to start all over again. Poor father had to walk to his farm, four kilometres each way, every day. This event was my first encounter with the military. It changed everything for us overnight. It also changed my name.

I was just 15, and as the eldest I had to do something to help my family, so when the captain of our local army squadron introduced a recruiter to my parents, I was ready to go anywhere. He made it sound so nice! I would go to Japan, and work in a famous hotel as a professional dancer. It would mean lots of money to send home to my poor family here. Of course I would have to go to Manila first to be trained and I would have to change my name to fit my new life.

So, I became MAMI! My recruiter was from a Philippine entertainment production group. They "train" their girls mainly in the clubs and bars on Mabini Street in Manila. My recruiter wanted me to go to Japan as a prostitute, but I demanded to go as an entertainer. I was lucky because he turned me

over to a Japanese recruiter who said I had quality. I was told that if I learned Japanese songs and took dancing lessons I could get an entry visa for show business in six months. He let me work in his Karaoke bar while I was waiting, but after two months I asked him to get me a fake passport and visa as I was worried about my family. Later on I learned that all these kindnesses were deducted from my earnings in Japan. By the way, the Aquino government claims it prohibits its people from being engaged in "shameful work", but while I was in Manila, my Japanese recruiter alone interviewed 20 new girls like me every day!

So at last I left for Narita with six other girls. None of us had been told where we would be working. At the airport a man met us and after confiscating our passports he took us to the promoter's office in Shinjuku. We were trained to work as strippers there. I objected and said I had already been trained as a singer in Manila, but nobody listened. I was sent first to a bar in Tokyo where I had to work as a stripper. From then on, sometimes I worked in bars and other times in strip halls. I was never allowed to stay in any one place for more than ten days. It is all a blur to me now, but I was sent all over Japan, and many times I did not even know where I was. As I went along, I was still paying off my debt to every recruiter, promoter, manager and bar owner along the way, so I never received the money I should have. There were several places where I received nothing we girls would be rushed off in the middle of the night to "get away" from the police, we were told. You remember I only had a fake passport and my visa was only a short-term tourist visa. My work at this time was just the usual service to customers with no prostitution. I liked these first few months the best.

My manager began to stress that I was illegally staying in Japan and could not be choosy any more. Then came the day my name was changed again! PROSTITUTE! God forgive me! I was taken to a snack bar in Nagoya where I was told that from now on my work included prostitution; that I had a debt of Y600,000 to the owner; that I would have to work it all off before receiving a salary, and that I could take no tips...or else! The "or else" was physical violence, and I often had black and blue marks on my body and even on my face. If you don't speak Japanese, the working conditions are always bad. I was lucky to learn a little before I came, but in this place it did not make any difference what language I spoke. Often customers would ask "how much?" and I would answer, "I'm not an object for sale!" If the owner had heard me he would have fined me, or beaten me. Japanese men really do not see the difference between a human being and a commodity, especially when that human being is a woman and an Asian!

Long after I had calculated my debt was paid off I was still not free, and still no salary was coming in. I decided to escape. I got away and found good work. I even had six days of rest, the first since I had come to Japan! But all

over Japan, snack bars and entertainment businesses are often Yakuza territory, so one day after a month and a half of freedom the Yakuza found me and took me back to the bar by force. They beat me up terribly and from then on I was locked up with one of them 24 hours a day. Through a customer, I was able to get a note out and a few days later two men came looking for me by name. I was afraid for my life so two of us managed somehow to get away! After hiding we finally asked a policeman to bring us to the police station. It must have been the look of terror on our faces that saved us, for I learned afterwards that the police often return women like us to the bars they ran away from. I still get weak when I think of what might have happened to us. As it was, we were both deported. And now there is a new law in Japan which makes it much more difficult for Asians to work in Japan. Even if we could slip into the country, the conditions of work would be one of total confinement with pay and working conditions up to the boss much like my Nagoya experience. I can never go back!

I had been able to send some money to my family in Tagum. They told me how much it had helped. But whenever I think of how much was robbed from me and how much I should have been able to give them I get angry and cry all over again. My family is the only thing that keeps me going. Do you know my mother still thinks I am a famous entertainer; that is one name I can never claim.

After I got back to Manila I worked in Ermita entertainment area for a while. By now, I thought I had seen it all. Filipino and Japanese recruiters, promoters, agents, managers, traders, club owners, Yakuza, Filipino gangs, prostitution, police, immigration, me...all that is part of the giant multi-billion dollar sex industry. And of course there are the customers. They always come in with plenty of money in their pockets. Here in the Philippines they come from the east, the west and the north. Some even come on company sponsored trips! I often wonder about their wives and families at home. I realize it is men who laugh at us and move us around in what they claim is the oldest business in the world. But why are women so silent? And why do some women have to sell themselves so their families and children will not die of hunger while other women can afford to wave their men folk off on sex tours?

As I said, I thought I had seen everything. Until I went to work in Olongapano! As the standards of this business go, I was getting "old" I could not last long in Manila, so a bar owner friend of mine said he would help me out. He gave me an introduction to one of his cronies, a former US navy man who ran one of the 1,000 clubs and bars clustered outside the US Subic Bay Naval Base. Owners in this town are mostly politicians or ex-servicemen.

After meeting him, my worst experiences in Japan began to look good. If I

had not been so desperate for money, I would have gone back to Manila and killed that man who made me think he was my friend. I never seem to learn! First thing I was told there was that I would be competing with 16,000 other prostitutes, and if I didn't like what I was ordered to do, I could go to the clubs where women do boxing and wrestling to "entertain" navy men. So what could I do? I went to work in the lewd shows that are meant to arouse the customers. It is a fearful thing to see young boys turn into screaming animals and worse, to have to go off with them after they had "won" me as a prize. In Olongapo it isn't prostitution we are paid for, it is debauchery!

Whenever I feel sorry for myself, I go out for a walk and take a good look at the street children. There are about 3,000 of them so they are everywhere. A good many of them are children of US military men. They wander around, some of them on drugs, living off garbage, or prostitution. I don't know which is worse. Many are sexually abused by the servicemen who are often heard bragging about how young "their kid" was! These children have lost their identity as Filipinos, and they certainly don't have any future. I make myself think "what if my youngest brother had to live like this..?" Then I can go back and smile through another day of hell.

The US Navy covers this up, of course, and if they don't, the owner-politicians do. The other day we were all paid to take part in a demonstration "demanding" the government to keep the US bases in the Philippines. Well I for one hate them I hate the whole place "sin city" as it is internationally known. The sailors have their own name for us, "little brown fucking machines"! I am sorry if that offends your sensitivity. That is one name that infuriates me!

Women are blamed for being prostitutes. All I know is that I had no choice in the matter. For myself and most of the women I know, we live like this because we have to feed and educate our brothers and sisters so they won't have to "live like this". Without us, our families would not have survived. The sex industry feeds on our poverty. So don't give me your sympathy, do something! Don't just condemn prostitution, help all of us to have productive work, with just wages, and maybe even good working conditions.

I don't know what is going to happen to me now. No one really seems to know what HIV does to women. Anyway the doctor put my present name down on my compulsory health report: AIDS CARRIER! That means I might be fired. If I am, what will happen to my family?

Well, you've heard all my names now! Now that you know, are you just going to walk away, feeling no responsibility?

I wish to acknowledge published sources used in "My story":

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A return to righteousness

The Right Reverend Barbara C. Harris
USA

God of grace and God of glory,
On thy people pour thy power.
Give us wisdom, give us courage
For the facing of this hour.

Cure thy children's warring madness,
Bend our pride to thy control
Shame our wanton, selfish gladness,
Rich in things and poor in soul.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage
Lest we miss thy kingdom's goal.
(Harry Emerson Fosdick)

In our time here together, we are focused on a virtue - a virtue which is inherent in the substance of God, our creator. It is an inviolate principle present in God's eternal involvement throughout creation - both in the world, indeed the universe which is his handiwork, and in humankind, made in his own image. That virtue is JUSTICE - that which is right and which proceeds from one who is himself righteous.

Justice is the moral attribute which belongs to God by nature and to people of God who obediently conform to God's will. Few have better articulated what this must mean to us than the prophet Amos, who saw the inseparability of justice and righteousness and called out for God "... let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like an overflowing stream". (5:24).

We focus also on the integrity of creation. Years ago, the beloved Gandhi described his understanding of the word "integrity". For him it meant the integration of heart, soul, mind and strength into the life which we have been given to live.

Over time we have seen those who use the word "integrity" tritely and loosely, seemingly unaware that, in truth, it means loving God with all of our heart, soul, mind and strength and loving our neighbour as ourselves. There can

be no integrity unless there is total integration of love of God with all that we are; love of neighbour in the sense of how God loves us and why God loves us; and love for all of God's creation, of which we are but stewards.
Again Amos urges: "Seek good, and not evil, that you may live and so the Lord, the God of Hosts, will be with you". In a verse omitted from our text today, and in another translation, the prophet exhorts, "Seek him who made the seven stars and Orion and turns deep darkness into the morning and darkens the day into night, who calls for the waters of the sea and pours them out upon the surface of the earth, the Lord is his name".

Gripped by a foreboding sense of doom for an unrepentant and apostate Israel, the prophet Amos' overriding themes are Yahweh, the Lord of nature, Yahweh, the Lord of history and Yahweh, the Lord of righteousness. Yahweh demands that I call our attention this morning. For his justice is the only true path to peace and finds its basis in a sense of the integrity of all of his creation.

A retrospective view presents us with some similarities in the situation faced by Amos, 760 years before the birth of Christ, and the world scene today. Amos lived into the inevitable pain of change that accompanies the confluence of cultures. Vast economic and social disparities were compounded by ethnic and religious differences. Economically, nomadic and agrarian habits and customs came into conflict. Socially, there were clashes between clan ethics with an emphasis on just dealings between individuals and the more complicated urban folkways with property values, rather than personal rights, as the prime consideration. Moreover, Amos saw those who made the procedure of the courts, to which the poor might naturally appeal for protection, a mockery - the scene of bribery and corruption.

Today we confront what our Second Draft Document delineates as the Reign of Injustice - including the scandal of poverty, violations of human rights, the sin of sexism and the tenacity of racism; The Reign of Violence; and The Disintegration of Creation.

The days through which we now are passing are dark indeed. They are filled with tragedy, suffering, despair, uncertainty and disillusionment. But the dark side of life is always difficult for most of us to face. Even those of us who do recognize it often turn away from it as quickly as we can and look for a brighter side. This is human! This is necessary! Yet the great temptation to which you and I are liable is that we too hastily will accept a false light, a false peace, a false sense of security and not sufficiently deal with the depth and the reality of the agony, pain and darkness through which we are passing.
A shallow optimism, responding to a cry of peace and reconciliation when there is no peace; a hope born of evading the reality of despair and our human frailty in the face of it; or freedom won at the expense of truth and justice are as detrimental to the life of the mind and spirit as is the obsessive

preoccupation with the tragedy of life.

That the forest of life through which we are walking in 1990 is darkened, needs little elaboration. The changing landscape not only is very altered each new day, but the forces which are responsible for the changes threaten to obscure our vision. Yet it is well to describe very briefly our human predicament in early 1990 because it is against such a background that the light of Christ shines brightest.

The international scene, characterized by intrigue and deception among the nations is shifting rapidly. The dominant policy and philosophy ruling the nations of the world - that of a balance of power politics among several major countries who use the rest of the world as pawns in their own interests - is being called into question.

The unfolding drama in Eastern Europe; the uneasy calm in the wake of Nelson Mandela's release and the unbanning of the ANC in South Africa; the continued turbulence in the Middle East, over which no one seems to have any influence; and the tenuous alliance emerging out of last week's election in Central America all are forcing the major powers to reassess not only their attitudes, but their policies and strategies as well.

Yet I think of the millions of homeless, starving and unemployed who are merely statistics to those in power. I think of the thousands who languish in prisons without trials or condemned by false trials through "due process" of a system operating on injustice.

Moreover, I think of many young lives in our cities, extinguished at a time which most of us consider the prime of life. I think of a vanished childhood and the faces of battered and defeated children we see daily around the globe. I think of what is ahead of them because of my fresh memory of what has been in my life and that of others. I think of lives yet unborn and the kind of world and families which we are preparing for them to begin their own journey.

I believe that today we belong to a landscape between the evening of a drowning world and the morning of a new day. Some of us may not survive the storm which may rage in the darkness of approaching night, unless, UNLESS, we find the hand of God, the light of Christ in that darkness.

When Jesus reached the moment in his life when he knew the time had come for him to begin the ministry for which he came into the world he began by preaching: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand". Repentance is by no means a state of consciousness which can be easily reached or easily accepted. It means that we must acknowledge that our whole

way of life has been misdirected. All of our life has been pursued in the wrong way and we must renounce, if not even denounce it, and acknowledge that our richest gain must be counted as loss. We must pour contempt on the pride we hold, even though it has worked and gotten us where we are in life.

Today I can speak out of personal experience. My corporate professional life was in a Darwinian world, largely a man's world. To make it and to succeed, I had to learn the tricks of the trade. I had to learn to fight. Today, as I look back on that chapter in my life, I must confess that I had conformed to this world and was far from being transformed by a renewed mind to pursue life in a way that was good and perfect and acceptable to God.

When Jesus began preaching "Repent", he had to point out that the way God's people were pursuing life was wrong and had to be turned around. The people of the kingdom were to be merciful. They had to be makers of peace and they had to be ready to be persecuted for taking righteous stands.

Jesus also had to say: heretofore you believed that the sin was only that of killing, but I tell you that to demean, to negate, to do violence to the sacredness of life are equally sinful. Heretofore you may have felt that it was sufficient to go with your brother one mile, but I say walk with your brother for as long as he needs you.

Heretofore you may have felt justified in loving those who loved you and hating those who hated you, but I say you must love even those who hate you. Heretofore you felt that you were justified in taking an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, but in the kingdom if one strikes you on one cheek, turn the other. Returning evil for evil or violence for violence means only that for eternity we shall be perpetuating evil. Evil can be defeated only by good. Wrong can be defeated only by righteousness. You must now adopt an ethic of love and you must be makers of peace.

Our present condition demands a similar recognition of the principle of degeneration. We have wearied ourselves in the ways of wickedness and we have failed to see justice done. And now, we must face a day of reckoning. There is a need for national repentance on the part of our several sovereign states and a return to the ways of justice as embodied in God's covenant with ancient Israel.

I return to the prophet from whom we take our text. "Alas for you who desire the day of the Lord! Why do you want the day of the Lord? It is darkness, not light; as if someone fled from a lion and was met by a bear; or went into the house and rested a hand against the wall, and was bitten by a snake". Or as Malachi asks: "Who can abide the day of his coming? And who shall stand at his appearing? For he is like a refiner's fire and like fuller's soap". Or, again,

to put it in the declarative of the Black American spiritual - "I went to the rock to hide my face, the rock cried out 'No hiding place'. There's no hiding place down here".

The question for us today is: have we yet repented? And does Amos speak even to us, asking us the very disquieting question: "Shall not the day of the Lord be darkness and not light, even very dark and no brightness in it?" Are not some of us still a people who celebrate feast days while the greater part of the world is perishing from famine? And when we assemble, is it not primarily inside the walls of our churches, but seldom in the world which Jesus came to save?

The words of the hymnist still await our response. "O Master, from the mountain side, make haste to heal these hearts of pain. Among these restless throngs abide, O tread the city's streets again."

No, I will not delight in your solemn assemblies nor do I need the money offerings which you elevate before the cross on which I died. It was life which I gave and it is life which I require of you - to participate with me in my work of redemption and liberation.

And while I pose these questions, I realize how deceitful the heart can be even wicked for the mind is capable of giving rhetorical acknowledgement to evident truths, so long as confession is not required. Many times in my prison ministry I sat with convicted persons who, in the privacy of our meetings, would acknowledge their guilt. When asked if they would be willing to confess their guilt, the answer always would be a vehement NO.

I think we all feel a certain amount of self-righteousness in our willingness to acknowledge that we all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God, but rarely, if ever, have I heard us confessing our sins. Even though we repent, it is only by confessing that we say - I know I need must seek the grace of the Holy Spirit to amend my life.

As the Church we are guilty of hypocrisy. We preach to others that they are sinners, must repent, confess and seek God's forgiveness, but I do not hear us confessing our own sins. I hear us repeating John 3:16 - "For God so loved the world that he gave...," but I also hear the Church doing more begging for its own survival as an institution than I have seen it giving. I have seen the Church holding its peace when it should have been a Nathan, confronting the king and saying "Thou art the man". I have seen God have to raise up stones because we, the disciples, have remained silent.

I still hear the charges of the Jews. While they were being gassed by the millions during World War II, the Church sat quietly by - hearing no evil,

speaking no evil and seeing no evil. I see legislators and chief executives spending billions of dollars to beat ploughshares into swords and pruning hooks into spears. In my own country, in my own church, I see lukewarm reactions to governments that oppress people in various other parts of the world.

If the trumpet gives an uncertain sound, who shall prepare for battle? As long as we, the Church, do not repent and confess our own sin, we are an uncertain trumpet and the people of God who await God's call through us will not be prepared for battle.

I am reminded of the moral and spiritual road travelled by both Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr. They recognized that:

> Cowardice asks is it safe?
> Expediency asks is it politic?
> Vanity asks is it popular, but
> Conscience asks, is it right?
> And there comes a time when we must,
> not because it is safe, nor because it
> is politic, nor because it is popular,
> but because conscience says it is right.

It is only then we can hear the words: "This is my beloved in whom I am well pleased" - realizing that we are not called to this high calling because we are worthy, but that God has chosen to make us worthy because we have responded to his call.

I call upon us today to repent and to confess to the world that we have examined ourselves and found ourselves wanting.

Because we repent, because we acknowledge and confess our sins, I announce - in God's Name - that we are forgiven.

Let us go in peace and sin no more

Proclamation of the word of hope

John 1:1-18

Werner Fuchs
Brazil

The word of life did not become paper, nor Sunday rhetorics, but flesh! Touchable personal and historic reality! I hope that you will follow these reflections in spite of my limited English and allow the Spirit to guide us. My conviction is that the paper, and even words, although necessary, have a secondary role. John 1 especially calls us into a new perception. Paradoxically, the author wants us "to see" glorious and divine reality in and within purely human conditions.

Therefore, let us close our eyes. All of you who do not need to read the translation, please close your eyes. At this moment we think about the simple fact that we are here at this convocation, we fragile men and women in the midst of such a significant historical event. When I close my eyes, I become specially aware of the disease I have, which sets sharp limits to my readings. But I am given the privilege to be here and to share my experiences and reflections with you. And you, with the eyes closed, certainly are recognizing your problems and limitations, maybe different ones, physical, intellectual, emotional or others. Nevertheless you are here, contributing to this event. The responsibility given to us is too great if we look into ourselves. This is at the same time frightening and encouraging! Because, if God calls us he does not call us "disabled". We are "on line" with the stuttering Moses (Ex. 4:1011) and with Paul whose "thorn in the flesh" only made the grace of God to be more efficient (2 Cor. 12:710).

Now, open your eyes and look at the people around you. Look into the face of your neighbour. If you like, touch him or her. You don't have to guess what he/she was thinking or feeling just now or what is his/her specific background. It is enough to realize: no one is perfect, but everyone is precious in the struggle for life, peace and justice, that is, in the purpose of God! That is why we are gathered here as one community. And we try to be consistent to the fact that God has chosen the community of the poor, the weak and the despised, in order to shame and to reduce to nothing the powerful (1 Cor. 1:2630).

Thus our existential and biblical starting point is: Creation is not perfect. Human life, the "flesh" suffers under limitations and deficiencies (cf. Rom. 8:22). But our fragilities and failures cannot hinder God's historic plans. God rather uses them for God's purposes. God calls people who suffer, the meek and the poor, to transform the reality into more justice and peace. When we speak of "Integrity of Creation" we do not mean cosmic harmony and beauty in itself. This is a Greek concept. We mean the sound relationship with the Creator and the integration of all creatures into God's plans. God said Creation was very good (Gen. 1:31), not perfect. He wants us to keep it good for all humankind (Gen. 2:15). Sin is to disobey God and to destroy Creation (Gen. 4:1011). Perfection is not in nature as such, but in God's love (Matt. 5:4548) and zeal for his people (Isa 26:11), revealed many times through nature. And it has pleased God to reveal these things to the little ones (Matt. 11:2526).

Among the countless examples of how the organized poor of my country experienced the presence of God in their struggle for survival, there are two testimonies from the landless peasants' movement. In 1984, a group of families tried to occupy an unproductive farm and was violently expelled by the police. Then they established nearby along the road a very provisional camp and had to endure for months all kinds of suffering. Heavy storms passed close to the camp, the hail could have destroyed everything, but in the last moment it changed direction. Another storm turned to the opposite side, thus forming a kind of a "V" around the camp. Manuel, an old farmworker commented: "The hand of God is over our camp. Here nothing bad can happen to us. There is nothing so sweet as to be protected by Our Old Father Almighty".

The second story happened with a group of 800 families the morning they started a camp at the border of the lake Itaipu. When they were preparing their first meal, a sudden wind and heavy rain arose from the lake. Miguel told me later that he managed to cling to the outside of his tent for more than one hour. "Only with the help of God I could resist and my tent protected a row of about 15 others. The rest of the camp was turned into chaos and desolation." And Elcio, a young peasant, added: "Immediately after the rain stopped we understood why God had sent this storm. It was because the mayor and chief of the police arrived, in order to blame our people. But when they saw our distress, our crying children and women, they were so perplexed that they lost their speech and returned to the city." Like the "terror from Yahweh" in the Old Testament (Gen. 35:5), God sent the storm to shut the mouth of those who came to oppress.

Manuel probably does not know that his name is derived from Immanuel (Matt. 1:23). But when in his political struggle he praises the sweetness of Our Old Father's protection, he is revealing to us the real meaning of this word, "God with us": It cannot be "God with everyone", but rather "God with us, the poor". Manuel, Miguel, Elcio and millions of others, men, women

and children, experience the presence of God on their side (Ps. 109:30f) because they struggle not for selfish interests, but for survival, dignity and social change, and because in their struggle they learn to share almost everything, to live in community, to reconcile with each other. In the centre of those camps of landless peasants there is always the cross, where they gather for prayers and celebrations. "God with them" is a surprise for themselves! They "see" his glory, full of compassion and truth (v. 14).

"The Word was made flesh and - literally - pitched his tent among us" (v. 14). The original word (*eskenosen*) makes us listen to the real meaning of the Incarnation. Can we imagine God present in total fragility? Living without any security? Not in buildings of stone and steel (Matt. 8:20)? Nor supported by church structures and logistics? The "Logos" is radically different because it dwells at the periphery of our power systems. In Latin America the base communities and social movements rediscover the biblical truth that God camped among the poor of the earth, the landless and homeless, those who hunger and thirst for justice (Matt. 5:6). Marginalized shepherds are chosen to be the first missionaries (Luke 2:1718). Out of a multitude of invalids the most disadvantaged is healed and thus placed in the midst of the conflict with the Jews about the Sabbath (John 5:210; 7:23f). The voice of God speaks from where we do not expect it.

In the Gospel of John, the "Word" (v. 1), the creative "Word of life" (v. 4), is the same as the commandment of love, justice and liberation (see Deut. 4:1213). "You are truly my disciples," says Jesus, "if you continue in my word" (8:31), "if you love one another" (13:35). Love is concrete concern for the needy, practised in deed and truth (1 John 3:17f), according to God's will of justice (John 5:3). This imperative of mercy and true relationship was with God from the beginning (v. 1) and enlightened humankind (v. 9). Through Moses it was given as a written code. But only in Jesus "compassion and truth" were made a written reality (v. 17). Jesus was himself poor and joined the claim of the prophets for justice and mercy instead of holocausts. And, by adding "I have come not to call the righteous, but sinners" (Matt. 9:13), Jesus questions the current concepts of justice. The "justice" of the scribes and pharisees (Matt. 5:20) marginalized people by labelling them as "sinners", and denying them the access to God's Kingdom. Today, justice is defined along the lines of the liberal concept of political "equality". That is why the churches always tend to address all its members the same way, no matter if they are rich or poor, oppressors or oppressed. However, equal treatment to unequal partners at the end produces more inequality. Without a really sharing community equality is a lie! Whereas in the Bible, justice is synonymous with "partiality"! Of God's preferential option for the impoverished! Yahweh "executes justice for the oppressed ... He upholds the widow and the orphan, but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin" (Ps. 145:78). The only criterion to judge all concepts and strategies of justice is the needy and despised. The

radical otherness of the poor, like Jesus and his friends, bears witness to the transcendence of the Logos over ideologies. "No one has ever seen God" (v. 18).

To know God is to practise justice. "Whoever does not practise justice is not of God, nor he who does not love his brother" (1 John 3:10, see 2:29, 4:7). Because of injustice men suppress the truth and are unable to know God (Rom. 1:18, 28f). Why did "his own people not accept him" (v. 11)? Jesus said to those who had believed in him : "You do not understand my words (*lalia*) because you cannot bear to hear my word (*Logos*)" (John 8:43). Logos means interpolation (*andrede*) from outside, from the periphery. It conflicts with self-sufficiency and arrogant self-justification, both of a person and of power structures (like the temple). The problem was not that Jesus was human (flesh) and fulfilled deeds of compassion, but that, in doing so he claimed to be one with the Father (John 8:58; 10:30). And for the Christians today the problem is not that the poor suffer, but that through them we have to hear the voice of God! That we have to despair of "our" hope and run after the "signs of hope" among the humble, the "disabled" and the outcasts of the world's societies. Also for church organisations it is easier to speak of "good news TO the poor" than of "good news FROM the poor" (CWME, Melbourne 1980). The words of an active member of a parish council against the landless peasants' movement still echo in my mind - and within the walls of many churches: "These campers are all useless tramps. They don't want to work. They just want to receive free meals. One should throw poison over them all with aeroplanes. Then they would stop disturbing those who are really working." John affirms judgment is already there when "the light has come into the world and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (John 3:19).

However, the light that darkness cannot overpower continues to shine (v. 5; see l John 1:7). The cross as the sacrifice of JESUS and as the suffering of the poor still remains in the centre of history. Just because it results both from the rejection of love and justice by the powerful, and from the willingness of the poor to endure this rejection. While so many church leaders only SPEAK about justice, there are a few others ready to SUFFER for the sake of it (Matt. 5:10). While many rejoice with the end of the wall between East and West, there are also those who cannot remain silent about the wall between North and South. While so many grassroot leaders and pastoral agents are killed under so-called democratic governments, the solidarity and organised resistance is growing. In the poor countries the strength of social popular movements is increasing and will become even stronger in this decade. These "children of God" (v. 12; Matt. 5:9) are agents of liberation. For the awakening poor majorities, hope in God and decisive historical action go always together. God casts to the dust the violent city and "the foot tramples it, the feet of the poor, the steps of the needy" (Isa. 26:56). This is at the same time a personal commitment and "grace in return for grace" (v. 17) Amen.

"My word shall not return to me void"

Isaiah 55:6-13

Kwok Pui-lan
Hong Kong

Introduction

On June fourth 1989 thousands of young Chinese students died at Tiananmen Square for their love of the country and democracy during the Beijing massacre. Several months later, we witnessed the unfolding events happening in Eastern Europe and in the Soviet Union. Just a few weeks ago, we watched on television Nelson Mandela; with courage and hope, walk out of the prison after twenty eight years in jail on television. Mandela has been invited to visit Korea, Japan, and possibly to stop over in Hong Kong en route.

All these astonishing happenings, fresh in my mind, helped me to digest and appreciate the meaning of the passage taken from the Book of Isaiah. The prophet Second Isaiah was writing at a time when the liberation of Israel was so much intertwined with international politics. Similarly we are gathering here in this World Convocation to discern the meaning of Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation from a global perspective. We live in a time when the destiny of the human species is a common responsibility and what happens in one place has important bearings on others. For example, when the Romanian government crushed the people's movement with brutal force, Hong Kong intellectuals and Christians put up a huge advertisement on the newspaper denouncing the Romanian dictator and started a campaign raising funds for the Romanian people. In their marches to freedom, people in Eastern Europe remembered the struggle of the Chinese, the suffering of South Africans, the volatile Nicaraguan situation, and the wholeness of creation. Many wore headbands with Chinese characters similar to those worn by the Beijing students last June.

Second Isaiah, the anonymous author of chapters 4055 of the Book of Isaiah, addressed the Jewish people in exile around 540 B.C.E. At that time, the Jews had been deported to Babylon for about fifty years and the once strong

Babylonian Empire was under the threat of Cyrus the Persian king. The Persians allowed the Jews in exile to return to their native land and to rebuild their temple. "Behind and within these events," writes Old Testament scholar Bernhard W. Anderson, "the prophet perceived the activity of Yahweh, the Creator of the ends of the earth and the sole director of the course of human history, who was revealing himself in a glorious theophany."[1]

As a prophet to the dispirited people in exile, Second Isaiah exhorted his people to embark on a New Exodus, leaving their homes in Babylon to start the dangerous journey to Jerusalem. We people in Hong Kong have also been politically separated from China, our motherland, for 148 years and the Sino-British negotiation has stipulated the return of Hong Kong to China in 1997. Just as we are preparing to face the unknown future, the June Fourth massacre shattered the hope and faith of the people. Some have lost their confidence and they are leaving the small colony at a rate of one thousand per week.

Chinese people, just like the Jews in the sixth century B.C.E., experienced a national calamity. The wounds are still unhealed and the hearts are bleeding.

We as theologians are called upon to tell the people that God is near and God's promise is still real. Like Isaiah, we heard the command from God, "Comfort, comfort my people" (Isa. 40:1).

The passage we have chosen for our Bible study touches the Oriental souls because it contains so many beautiful images from nature. Heaven, earth, rain, bud, seed, mountain, and pine tree are recurrent motifs in Chinese poetry and painting. Many Old Testament commentators have overlooked the significance of these images, thinking that they are simply rhetorical devices to illustrate what the prophet has to say. But for me, the use of these images are not just literary embellishments or ways of illustration for they bring out a very significant dimension of the prophet's theology.

Second Isaiah evokes images from nature to share with us his deepest conviction that historical happening has a lot to do with the cosmological realm, and vice versa. This central message is not only found in Second Isaiah but also in the Psalms and in Genesis.[2] Similarly, there is a tendency to see each part in connection with the whole in the Chinese worldview. We call this "correlative thinking"[3] which does not separate immanence from transcendence, the material from the spiritual, the human realm from the cosmological. We can illustrate what this means by a famous passage from the Chinese philosopher Chang Tsai:

> Heaven is my father and earth is my mother, and even such a small being as I finds an intimate place in their minds. Therefore, that which

> fills the universe I regard as my body and that which directs the universe I regard as my nature. All people are my brothers and sisters, and all things are my companion.[4]

I would like to demonstrate how this correlative thinking helps me to interpret the message of Second Isaiah.

The Fathomless Nature of God

After the June Fourth incident, we as theologians were often asked by our people, "Where is God when the Beijing students died?" Indeed we have no answer. As we heard what was going on in Eastern Europe and in the Soviet Union, our hearts rejoiced with them. But our people continue to ask, "Why were the Chinese people cursed?"

Likewise, Second Isaiah had a hard time interpreting the exile for he could not simply say that they were deported to Babylon because they had sinned. He tried to provide a plausible interpretation by retelling their national history and by evoking the powerful presence of God in nature. Earlier in the chapter, in verses 35, Second Isaiah reminded the people of God's promise to David and extended the Davidic covenant to the house of Israel. Rather than promising a continuous Davidic Dynasty, God has commissioned the whole people of Israel to be a witness to all nations.

More interestingly, the prophet resorted to nature to console his people. Does this sound familiar? Remember what does God says to Job out of the whirlwind? God asks Job "Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Who brings rain on a land where no man is, on the desert in which there is no man; to satisfy the waste and desolate land, and to make the ground put forth grass?" (Job 38) Nature has a healing effect! The vast heaven and the abundance of earth demonstrate to us the fathomless nature of God. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways." We may think that there is no hope for tomorrow. But the sun still rises and the rain falls. The presence of the cosmos reminds us God is near and we are confronted with the power of the divine which is far greater than us.

Immanence and Transcendence

For Second Isaiah, God's word is effective just like the rains and snow come down from heaven, watering the earth so that seeds can sprout and plants grow. These agricultural images have great significance for those of us coming from societies which depend so much on agriculture for living. Marcel Granet, the great French sinologist, distinguishes between two different ways of appreciating the divine. The nomadic people of Israel pictured God as almighty, intervening in human history and protecting people in warfare. On the contrary, the Chinese people had developed farming from early on

and they are tied to the soil. They image the divine, or the Tao, as silent, non-intrusive, and sustaining.

Many Western people misunderstood the Oriental approach as naturalistic and mechanistic. This is very far from being true. Oriental people seldom look at nature from the mechanistic view of modern science. We understand nature as sacred, purposeful, and full of meaning.

The providence of nature is often portrayed by female images in many world religions. In Greek religions, the Goddess Gaia is the archetype for both earth and mother. In Chinese religion the all embracing Tao is also pictured in female images such as a female animal, a vessel, and a mother. In Chapter 6 of the Taoist classic Tao Te Ching, Tao is literally compared to the dark animal or the valley spirit that is the foundation of heaven and earth:

The valley spirit does not die,
It is called the dark female animal.
The door of the dark female animal
Is the root of heaven and earth.
Lingering, it only seems to exist,
Yet its use is inexhaustible.

The Taoist classic understands the ultimate principle of the world in terms of a mother principle which is fertile, moving, and inexhaustible.[5] The resurgence of Goddess worship in the West has also rediscovered the feminine dimension of the divine and the powerful image of the female body as holy. On this international women's day, it is fitting to remember the powerful women who have gone before us and to affirm the potential of women as agents of change in our society.

Second Isaiah in this passage does not tell us how he understands the natural process. For the Chinese people, all modalities of nature are organically connected and the Chinese vision of nature can be characterized as continuous, holistic, and dynamic. Nature has the infinite potentiality of ever transforming itself.[6] As nature has this potentiality, God's word also has the infinite power to bring out its effect. The word of salvation now being spoken to Israel has its efficacy. God as the Creator and the Saviour cannot be separated.

The Renewal of Creation

Second Isaiah called his people to leave Babylon to begin the New Exodus. The day when they should go out in joy and be led in peace, even the mountains and the hills would sing, and the trees of the field would clap their hands. Second Isaiah was so deeply moved by the hope of the liberation of his people that he employed these expansive metaphors not often found

in Hebrew poetry. When the oppressed people in the world rejoice and sing on the day of deliverance, all nature will join in the triumphant chorus.

Even nature will be renewed and transformed. "Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress; instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle." Cypress in Oriental culture symbolizes immortality and planting a tree is a sign of hope in many cultures. The Afro-American poet Alice Walker writes: "When they kill your father, plant a tree. When they rape your mother, plant a tree. When they burn your forest, start a new one."

A Christian in Beijing who had participated in the hunger strike last June wrote this moving poem which was smuggled out of China:

> One is weak and vulnerable,
> Many will be strong and powerful
> Now we are getting weak and fallible.
> But there'll be the day,
> In the place where we lie down
> A tree of knowledge will grow.
>
> Mother, do not cry for us,
> do not weep for us.
> Only don't forget to water my beloved tree.
> God will bless China, this tree of knowledge
> which will give shade and comfort to all
> Chinese people.[7]

The renewal of creation, the growing of the cypress and the myrtle, the singing of hills and clapping of trees will be an everlasting sign of God's grace and covenant with the people. Human history will be redeemed and the cosmos will be restored as the holy sacrament from God.

A Call to Hope

In the past few days, we had chances to listen to testimonies from different parts of the world. We are confronted with the global issues of racism, sexism, militarism, deforestation, acid rain, and the greenhouse effect. The root problem of all these issues is that we have collectively lost the power to think in correlative terms and to act in solidarity with one another. The prophet Second Isaiah calls us to repent and also to have hope. "Seek the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near."

Recently the Christians in Hong Kong have invited Ms Halina Bortnowska of Poland to visit Hong Kong and share with us the witness of the Polish Church. Ms Bortnowska understood that many Hong Kong people have lost their hope and they are trying to emigrate to other countries. She concluded

her witness by sharing this story written by Joseph Conrad, originally from Poland.

> There was once a young man who always wished to be a good sailor. Once he was serving on a ship full of pilgrims. Suddenly he heard a voice crying, "Danger! Abandon the ship." The young man was so afraid that he immediately jumped from the ship. To his great surprise, the ship did not sink, and the pilgrims managed to reach the shore.

The story strikes a deep chord in the hearts of the Hong Kong Christians. Its meaning is far greater than it originally entails. The planet earth is like a sinking ship today and we cannot get away from it. But we can abandon the ship if we lose our hope. I used to sing a song written by Koreans when I felt downtrodden and helpless. The title of the song is "Green Pine Trees."

> Look at that hill there full of green pine trees,
> Though there's no one at all to look after them,
> in the wind and rain,
> in the drifting snow,
> They still stand fresh and green,
> till the end of time.
>
> Aching and sorrowful,
> days of the past,
> We never want to see those days again,
> By our work and sweat,
> with new consciousness,
> We'll be like green pine trees in the wilderness.
>
> Though we don't have so much, friendship still is ours,
> So let's walk hand in hand,
> sharing pains and tears.
> Though the way we walk is so long and dark,
> our visions clear and bright for the way ahead.

[1] - Bernhard W. Anderson, "Exodus Typology in Second Isaiah," *in Israel's Prophetic Heritage*, ed. Bernhard W. Anderson and Walter Harrelson (London: SCM Press, 1962), p. 182.

[2] - Richard J. Clifford, "The Hebrew Scriptures and the Theology of Creation," *Theological Studies* 46 (1985): 507523.

[3] - Benjamen I. Schwartz, *The World of Thought in Ancient China,* (Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press, 1985), pp. 369378.

[4] - Chang Tsai, -Western Inscriptions from Wingtsit+ Chan, trans. and comp., *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy,* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1969), p. 496.

[5] - Ellen Marie Chen, "Nothingness and the Mother Principle in Early Chinese Taoism," *International Philosophical Quarterly* 9 (1969): 401.

[6] - Tu Weiming, "The Continuity of Being: Chinese Visions of Nature," in his *Confucian Thought; Selfhood as Creative Transformation* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1985), pp 3550.

[7] - "Mother, I have not Made a Mistake," poem by Christian hunger striker in Beijing, June, 1989, Reprinted in Re-elections, No. 3 (August-September, 1989): 2526.

What happens when a wall collapses?

Birgit Dibbert
Former German Democratic Republic

I shall speak to you in German. I come from the German Democratic Republic. Please forgive me: I have completely changed my original text in view of my impressions here at the Convocation, but since one object of this Assembly is to bring about change you will just have to put up with that. I have noted that I may not talk to you in general terms about real socialism. So if you have a document on this theme in front of you - throw it away. It is a bad document.

What happens when a wall collapses? The sense of inner liberation was beyond description. Most people in the GDR probably noticed that, when on 1 May they crossed the frontier to the west. And you can believe me when I say that I cannot convincingly reproduce such enthusiasm and emotion here. Opening the frontiers to the German people on the other side of the wall - that increased people's hopes a thousandfold. It was a decisive move towards the sense of their own value which people in the GDR could have. That was in November.

Meanwhile much has changed in society. The great enthusiasm and still greater hope has been replaced by a vague feeling of uncertainty. Frustration and faith in the future meet, as do anxiety and optimism.

I think you will be interested in what our socialism has meant. I shall give you a personal view and tell you what the GDR has been and is for me.

The idea of socialism was implanted in me by our entire educational system, and I was fascinated by it. It seemed quite clear to me that private ownership of factories and so on should be abolished because they are the source of all economic and therefore all political power. And from people in western Europe I heard that capitalism always means rich and poor and also profit - as much profit as possible - for the few. There was some truth in what we were taught.

But this attempt at real socialism did not work. I would not dare pass judgment on those who suffered as communists in the second world war and wanted to build a German state along socialist lines in 1945, as if their intentions were dishonest. That was at the start. Later, those who had the power were corrupted by it. In school we learned that human beings are of central importance. But that had long since ceased to be so when I went to school. Holding on to power was what mattered. For that purpose a great control system was set up, images of the enemy were built up, and to achieve this the land was shut off to the outside world. And because we could not have an opposition, nothing could be done against this despotic rule. Power was uncontrolled.

The price for this attempt at socialism was high. Many people were behind bars simply because they had expressed an opinion other than that demanded by the ideology. Environmental questions were constantly subordinated to economic questions. It was said that only when we had got enough out of the economy would we have the opportunity sometime or other to think about the environment. But we never got round to "enough".

Many of the goods and much money produced by the workers in industries never benefited the workers, but those with power put that money in their pockets, built luxurious houses, took the woodlands which really should have belonged to the people and turned them into hunting grounds. No-one from the people could enter these areas. All these things can be said with justification, for the government of the time is responsible for them.

But much, much worse is the other price we had to pay: the realisation that human beings, the people, in other words we ourselves - I myself in fact measure things by their money value. Our experience was as follows. If the government makes it possible for those who live in a new apartment block to have brown coal (lignite) in our country, and no matter how poor in quality and damaging to the environment it is, they will rather open the window because it is more comfortable than to switch off the heating in the room. If the government makes it possible for those who live in a new apartment block to have hot water for a low lump sum per month, people will let the hot water drain away without using it, just so that they can have their bath ready at a pleasant temperature for washing themselves. If the government makes bread very cheap, the farmers - who know the work that goes into making the bread and the actual value of the loaf - will buy up tonnes of bread and use it as fodder for their cattle. If a government assures all workers that they will receive a specific wage every month whatever the circumstances, then these workers will try to perform their tasks by putting themselves to as little trouble as possible at as little cost to themselves as they can, frequently even making only a show of working. You can imagine how the economy of a country will collapse that way.

Reaching such conclusions was a frightful affair. You will perhaps say it was naive to expect anything else. But we are discussing that very naïvete here - or am I wrong?

There will be a united Germany. The way is still not clear but we shall introduce the market economy. I see that the market economy will bring efficiency and quality and these are absolutely necessary, especially for our environment. But I know that money - and not human beings - is central in the market economy. So we shall have to try to give expression to the value of human beings against the power of money. That is becoming very difficult, for what combine or monopoly is interested in human beings? I firmly maintain that all financial investments now being made in the GDR by great economic powers from western Europe serve the purpose of opening up a new market that promises to yield profit. Human beings are important only as consumers. Benevolent financial aid given out of love comes only from the little people.

I have mentioned the advantage of the market economy but I see this other side too very clearly. I think our task will be to give the system of the market economy as social a structure as possible. The struggle will be a continuous one, but democracy gives us the opportunity.

At home the idea of socialism looks as if it were dead. This can be understood by people with many years experience of how that idea can be distorted. But here I must also say what has grieved me in the restructuring, even though it was a liberation. Until now I did not know the importance of money. Because the cost of living was so low (bread, energy, water, rents) I never had any qualms about the next day or month in that regard. Can you imagine what it is like if you know that both tomorrow and the next day and even on a very small income you can pay for your accommodation and your food!

Until now I have always been sure that I would find a job even if I was perhaps liable to illness and therefore less productive. Only since we talked in the family a month ago about unemployment for the first time, have I experienced a paralysing fear.

Let me add something more. It was of course wrong to try to impose a collectivist spirit on human beings, and naturally it did not work. But we - people, for instance, who have studied together in a course - still know each other, and we notice if someone is not present. I only wish we could rescue something of this special feeling of community and bring it with us: it is perhaps a value urgently needed in the united Germany.

And it is a great wish of mine that our church, our church too, should continue. You know, I think there is a difference between a church which in some sense is oppressed and has to struggle for its existence and a church that is

officially recognised. In the future a great many people will profess their loyalty to the church and perhaps that will soon be the "done thing" in society. Until now my experience has been that our church has tried to provide a voice for those who had no voice in our society. That called for great effort and it was dangerous. Will our church become more powerful in the future and will it then still be the voice of those who have no voice?

I have a further wish. It is that we - people, the church - continue to be critical. In the GDR we have learned how important it is to question what lies behind every political decision, to keep on reminding and claiming human rights, to be annoying gadflies with our criticisms, not to be indifferent to society, not simply to go along with every development, but to question it, resist it and check it a hundred times: what will this development do for people, in our own country and throughout the world? For many years this has been our practice in the GDR. Is that not also a value we must take with us into the new society?

We include all this in our prayers. It would be bad if after a further forty years we had to say that we misused the idea of freedom to the detriment of justice, peace and the integrity of creation, which is what we are now saying about the idea of socialism.

An affirmation of faith in a world divided by walls

Us and Them: The Difficult Task of Living Faith Daily

Jim Wallis
USA

My neighbourhood of Columbia Heights runs along 14th Street, a scene of Washington, D.C.'s much-publicized, so-called "riots" following the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. in the bitter spring of 1968. The now infamous "riot corridor", as the area is still called, even today bears the scars of the frustrated and angry violence that erupted when people's hopes were suddenly and brutally cut down. Burned out buildings and vacant lots remain after more than 20 years.

Several years ago, my sister Barbara was walking through the neighbourhood with her 5-year old son, Michael. They were on their way to the Sojourners day-care centre. Michael surveyed the scene on the block and, looking up at his mother with puzzlement, asked, "Mommy, was there a war here?"

Indeed, the empty shells of buildings, piles of rubble, and general devastation all around could easily give that impression. Perhaps the eyes of a child can see what jaded adult vision quickly passes over or too easily accepts - there was and is a war here. It goes on every day, and the casualties are everywhere.

For most of the 14 years Sojourners Community has lived in Washington, D.C., the inner-city neighbourhoods of the capital have been invisible to the nation. Everyone knows "official Washington" with its marble, monuments, and malls. But "the other Washington" has been off limits to the blue-and-white tour buses and to the consciousness of the rest of the country.

Here are substandard tenements instead of stately government offices. Here children play in back alleys strewn with glass, trash, and syringes instead of running in beautiful parks. The only monuments are the neglect, indifference, and the stranglehold of entrenched racism on the city that proclaims itself a beacon of freedom to the world. Here the homeless huddle

literally in the shadows of the great houses of state power, trying to keep warm by sleeping on the grates that expel hot air from the heating system of the State Department, the Pentagon, and the halls of Congress.

Suddenly Washington, D.C., began making national and international headlines - not as the centre of power but as the "murder capital" of the nation. Quickly the media cameras so used to turning away from "the other Washington" focused their attention on neighbourhoods overrun with drugs and guns.

Columbia Heights has become the murder capital of the murder capital, according to the Metropolitan Police Department. The killings continue unabated on the streets where we live, and in recent months they have come very close to home. At a recent meeting in the Sojourners Neighbourhood Centre one local resident asked, "What does it mean to live in the most murderous neighbourhood in the most murderous nation in the world?"

In 1983 I travelled to the war zones of Nicaragua on the first team of a project known as Witness for Peace. In a refugee resettlement camp, I met a 13-year-old boy named Agenor, who made a great impression on me. His baseball cap, tattered shirt, and beat-up tennis shoes reminded me of the kids who run up and down the streets of my own neighbourhood. But this thin Nicaraguan boy carried a heavy automatic weapon on his back. He was a member of the citizens militia, defending against contra attacks and a feared U.S. invasion. As I returned home, Agenor's face, with his searching brown eyes and shy smile, were etched in my memory.

I met Eddie on the street the day I got back. He also was 13. While telling Eddie about my trip, I had a terrible thought. If the U.S. government continued to escalate its war in Nicaragua and eventually sent through troops, Eddie - a young black man from a poor family with few other options - would be among the first to go. That had been the pattern in the Vietnam War.

In that moment, I imagined the awful possibility of Eddie and Agenor meeting on some Nicaraguan battlefield, raising their guns to aim at each other, and one or both being killed. The great ideological confrontation between East and West would come down to Eddie and Agenor shooting each other - two young men, one black and one brown, dying in the name of a global conflict between two white superpowers. Instead of that horrible picture, I tried to imagine Eddie and Agenor playing baseball together.

Eddie never died on a Nicaraguan battlefield, as I had feared. But Eddie did die last March on the streets of his own neighbourhood. He became, for a short while, the latest victim and the newest statistic in the city's epidemic of violence.

We are losing a whole generation of young people in our cities to poverty, drugs and violence. Washington, D.C., is a city out of control, reeling from the brutal consequences and tremendous suffering of a global economic, social, and spiritual crisis that has yet to be named, understood, or addressed. It is a crisis of the highest magnitude, and it points to a global reality that we must recognize and squarely face.

Through these painful and soul-searching events, something has become quite clear to me: Washington, D.C., stands now as a parable unto the world. The crisis in the capital of the wealthiest and most powerful nation tells the story of the crisis the whole world now faces. In Washington, D.C., today, we see a mirror of what the global system has become. The brutal paradoxes of the most famous city on earth have become a parable that can teach us what we must learn if we are to survive.

Infant mortality is at Third World levels in the same city with more lawyers and real estate developers than any other. Black Youth unemployment is upward of 60 percent, while white professional couples with two incomes search for investments. Scholastic Aptitude Test scores for D.C. public school students are 100 points below the national norm, while the city's private school students score 100 points above it.

Nineteen million tourists spend $1.5 billion each year here, while the D.C. jail runs out of money for toilet paper. The downtown hotel business is booming, while more and more women and children move into the city's shelters or on to the streets.

Young white men pay some of the highest college tuition rates in the country at local universities, while their black counterparts are nine times more likely to be the victims of a homicide.

Washington, D.C. is a microcosm of the dynamics that now govern the world order. The current drug war brings all these contradictions into sharp relief.

No one knows the exact numbers, but an extraordinary percentage of D.C. youth are involved in the drug traffic. As in source countries such as Colombia, drug trafficking has become a livelihood for the poor. In the high-stakes atmosphere of drugs and money, life becomes cheap indeed. In Colombia now, it costs only 40 dollars to have someone murdered. In both Colombia and Washington, D.C., poverty sets the stage for tragedy, and the drama of drugs simply carries out the executions.

Washington, D.C., like the rest of the global system, is now run by a two-tiered economy. At the top is a highly lucrative and booming sector of managerial and professional elites, while at the bottom is an increasingly

impoverished population that services the high-tech economy but whose labour and even consumption are less and less needed. Whole sectors of the global population are now simply defined outside of the economic mainstream. And to be shut out of the global economy means to be consigned to death. Like Jesus' parable of the rich man and the beggar Lazarus, millions and millions of God's children are now shut outside the gate of the global economy.

The earth itself suffers along with the poor. Our politically neglected and continually poisoned environment faces real threats from global warming trends, ozone depletion, acid rain, contaminated water, unhealthful food, polluted air, toxic and nuclear wastes, and ravaged wildlife. We will not escape the consequences of our behaviour.

As native American leader Chief Seattle said years ago, "This we know. The earth does not belong to people. People belong to the earth. This we know. All things are connected. Whatever befalls the earth befalls the people of the earth. We did not weave the web of life. We are but a mere strand in it. Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves!"

In our neighbourhood, children of 8, 9 and 10 years wear beepers on their belts. It is not because they are young lawyers and doctors, but because drug dealers call the children at play when a drug run has to be made. It is safer for the dealers to use children for their drug runs, with detection and punishment less likely.

Young people can make more money in a day or week than they ever dreamed possible. Thousands of dollars are available to them in an economy that has never offered them more than uncertain, part-time employment at minimum wage. And many are taking the option.

Drugs are not the only narcotic here. The money that comes from drugs is the addiction that is leading to the violence. That addiction - the addiction to materialism - is fed every hour of every day in this society. It is not only legal to feed that addiction, it is the whole purpose of the system. It is our reason for being as a people - to possess and consume.

After creating such an overpowering, all-encompassing, all-defining addiction, we block its satisfaction to the poor. It is an unspeakable cruelty to create an addiction and then deny its satisfaction, the whole time feeding the desire. Materialism is literally killing the poor, while at the same time it is destroying the nation's soul.

The crisis of our inner cities will not change until we change. Social transformation will not occur without a transformation of values.

A few years ago at a press conference of the Reagan White House, Attorney General Edwin Meese declared to the nation that there are no hungry people in America. The next day was Saturday, and the food line formed early outside the Sojourners Neighbourhood Centre, only one and a half miles from the White House. Three hundred families receive a bag of groceries which is critical for getting through the week. Just before the doors are opened, all those who helped prepare and sort the food join hands to pray.

The prayer is normally offered by Mrs. Mary Glover, a 60-year-old black woman who knows what it is to be poor and who knows how to pray. She prays like someone who knows to whom she is talking. You can tell that Mary Glover has been praying to her God for a long time.

She thanks God for the gift of another day. Then she prays, "Lord, we know that you'll be coming through this line today, so help us to treat you well." Mrs. Glover knows very well who it is that waits in line with the hungry and huddles with the homeless to keep warm on the steam grates of Washington, D.C.

She knows the meaning of Jesus' words in Matthew 25 where he says, "I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat. I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink. I was naked and you didn't clothe me. I was a stranger and you didn't take me in. I was sick and in prison and you didn't come to see me."

And the people said, "Lord, Lord. When did we see you hungry and thirsty and naked, a stranger, sick and imprisoned? We didn't know it was you. Had we known it was you we would have done something. We would have responded. Had we just known it was you, we would have at least formed a Social Action Committee. But we didn't know it was you!"

Then Jesus says, "As you have done it to the least of these, you have done it to me." To those who would name his name, Jesus asks, "How much do you love me? I'll know how much you love me by how you love them."

Mary Glover understands Matthew 25. Her prayer is the best commentary on the 25th chapter of the gospel of Matthew I've ever heard.

Perhaps an image of God for us in our times is a black grandmother in the inner city weeping and mourning the loss of her children - a whole generation of young people who are simply being abandoned and destroyed. If we become angry - with all of our sin, complicity, and limited compassion - how angry must God be at what's happening?

The most pressing issue today is that we really have no sense of solidarity with one another - no communion, community, or common bond. A very telling

example is indeed what is happening in my neighbourhood.

A whole generation of young people is being destroyed. But for most Americans, this is just an inner-city problem, a crime concern, a drug crisis, or a violence issue. What is really happening is that a whole generation of us is being destroyed; but white America doesn't see it that way. It isn't us. It's them. How can we call people who are desperately poor and struggling to survive a "permanent underclass"?

In the slums of Manila, I saw whole families washing plastic and styrofoam from the streets for a living. At the end of the day you can make two dollars if you wash enough plastic. They are us, and we are them. And we are deeply connected.

If we fail to see these connections, we are simply not going to make it. All of our other problems stem from this one. At the heart of all of these issues is one single issue - that we have lost our sense of being brothers and sisters, daughters and sons of God. We are the children of God, who are inextricably bound to one another. And we will either live together, or die as those who forgot that they were part of a common destiny.

Jesus addresses the basic spiritual problem we face - a lack of human solidarity with one another. Christ takes the identity and flesh of the ones we have abandoned and says, "What you have done to the least of these, you have done to me." It was/is God's way to teach us the human solidarity we must learn in order to survive and to fulfil our creative purpose - God literally becomes the one we've decided is unimportant.

Matthew 25 provides the crucial insight and converting word we need in order to re-establish our lost solidarity with one another. It is as clear a word as can be found about the judgment of God upon the ways we are treating one another and the command of God to change our ways. But this is no abstract judgment; Christ himself assumes the form and flesh of our many victims and cries out to us to stop. "You are not just killing them," exclaims Jesus, "you are killing me!"

It is time to heed the words of the prophet Amos: "Let justice roll" into the streets of oppression and drugs and hopelessness, and also into the avenues of luxury and fear. "Let justice roll" into the ghettos and barrios and squatter camps, but also into the affluent suburbs of comfort and indifference. "Let justice roll" into the board rooms of corporate wealth and the corridors of political power.

"Let justice roll" into a church made lukewarm by its conformity and isolated by its lack of compassion. "Let justice roll" and set free all the captives - those

under bondage to poverty's chains and those under bondage to money's desires. "Let justice roll" - and let faith come alive again to all those whose eyes long to see a new day.

Most U.S. political leaders are drawing all the wrong lessons from the tumultuous happenings in the Eastern bloc. They see it as vindication rather than prophesy. Communism has failed and we won, they proudly exclaim. That perspective is as short-sighted as it is self-serving.

History will overtake the West as well. It's only a matter of time. Here, too, the system is failing while we struggle to keep up the illusions. Our inner cities, which have become war zones, are but the first sign of a global economy that is unravelling.

The historic events we witness today are prophetic. Today it is an east wind of freedom and democracy that is blowing out the old. Tomorrow it will be a south wind of justice and liberation to set free the oppressed. You cannot cheer democracy for Polish workers, Lithuanian farmers, and Chinese students while you block freedom from South African labourers, Salvadoran *campesinos* and Korean slum dwellers. When the south wind blows with the hopes of the world's poor on its wings, it will cause a chilly gale to be felt by those northern global power centres that run the world's system of economic apartheid.

Today an ugly wall of ideological repression is crumbling down. Tomorrow the invisible walls of international trade, finance, and economic oppression will also come tumbling down. It's hard to stop the wind when it begins to blow. Today an ugly wall of ideological repression is crumbling down. Tomorrow the invisible walls of international trade finance, and economic oppression will also come tumbling down. It's hard to stop the wind when it begins to blow.

Thy will be done

Matthew 6:5-13

Gottfried Forck
Former German Democratic Republic

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

In our first service of worship we were introduced to the doxology in Psalm 104 on God's creation and were at the same time asked whether we could still praise God in this way since creation is being so greatly threatened and destroyed.

In the second service we came to see clearly what punishment must befall us precisely because of our injustice and we were at the same time given the promise of God's forgiveness.

The point in the third service was that despite possible oppression and discrimination we must stand up for the good and for peace.

And in yesterday's service we were reminded that not only have we human beings been liberated by God to do what is good but that the whole creation too is meant to be free.

With this assumption that God has acted and wants to act in an entirely personal way towards the world and also towards us, the biblical passage now invites us in this service to pray in the right way. Let us take special note here of Jesus' words as we find them in the Gospel of Matthew. First of all he tells us that the proper place for our prayers is not in public. He does not mean by this to exclude us from thinking in prayer about what is happening in public life. In 1 Timothy 2 prayer for all people and especially for governments is even expressly commended to us by the apostle. But what Jesus does mean to tell us is that prayer can and must be in one direction: it must be made to God alone. Anyone who seeks to use their prayer for display is misusing it. Many in Jesus' day wanted to gain prestige among their fellows through their street-corner prayers. They wanted in that way to have a reputation for piety and for being genuinely God-fearing. It may well be that this will only rarely

be the danger we run into today. It is more likely that we shall seek to make an impression in the eyes of those who pray along with us in our prayer fellowships with other Christians that we are seemingly spirit-filled. Nor can the danger be excluded that we seek to use our prayers to demonstrate against other people. In the intercessory devotions which initiated and accompanied the change in our midst in the German Democratic Republic we sometimes succumbed to that danger. What happened then was that many taking part in the devotions applauded a prayer whenever particularly critical things were said about our authorities in it. Jesus does not want us to turn our prayer into a manifesto. Our prayer should be addressed to God alone. But Jesus also wants us to pray to God. He takes prayer for granted as something natural. That is why he begins his comments with the words. "And when you pray...."

Secondly, Jesus advises us that we do not need to use many words in speaking to God. And in this advice the sentence that counts most of all is: "your Father knows what you need before you ask him." This does not mean that basically your prayer is totally pointless. If that were the right way to look at it, Jesus would not have taught us the "Our Father" as the proper prayer. Rather, the advice that God already knows what we need is meant to encourage us to pray with confidence. Neither our praise nor our intercessions depend on their being all-embracing, but in our prayers we can feel sure that we are talking to God who wants to be our loving Father for Jesus' sake and who is nevertheless at the same time our creator, sustainer and Lord. Hence in the Approach (addressing God) "Father" is followed immediately by "in heaven". In prayer we can trust ourselves to our Father in heaven in all our troubles and difficulties. But "our Father" as the form of approach to God reminds us also that God does not seek to be only my Father or the Father of a particular group of people but wants to be the Father of all, simply for Jesus' sake.

So before we go any further we can say that the proper content of prayer to God is not only what affects ourselves but also what affects everyone else. In the prayer taught to us by Jesus this becomes clear from the fact that we are first of all to ask for what matters to God and only then for ourselves and our personal interests.

> Hallowed be thy name,
> Thy kingdom come,
> Thy will be done,
> On earth as it is in heaven.

That in fact embraces everything God has done in this world and in and for us. The name of God surely embraces the idea that he has created this world, chosen his people and led and preserved them throughout history. And God's kingdom surely means the gracious rule of God which Jesus has

proclaimed to us. It means the rule of the one whose power is present in the weak and who stands by the poor, the lowly and the insignificant. This we have already heard in Hannah's doxology and sung in the words from Mary's doxology (the Magnificat). We should not understand what we have heard and sung in these only in a spiritual way. On the contrary, it has become a reality in this world and should become an even fuller reality in future.

The autumn of last year we perhaps experienced something of the reality of these comments in the non-violent uprising in the German Democratic Republic. On the one hand there was the power of the state security service and the police and on the other the demonstrators with their cries of "no violence" and "we are the people"; and God gave the victory to the defenceless.

When we pray "thy kingdom come" we are praying that God's gracious rule which oppresses no-one may establish itself in this world. And we are praying in the certainty that it will be so because God has promised it.

And when we pray "thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven" we are attuning ourselves to this happening in us and with us and through us. Justice, peace and the integrity of creation are indeed what God wills to happen on this earth.

In thus praying first of all for what is important to God we are praying too for what is likewise of the utmost importance for us. All our other wholly personal troubles and difficulties can be included thereafter. They too can be tackled in prayer but they are really included already in the first part of the Lord's Prayer. I do not intend to go into more detail on this second part of the "Our Father". But let me draw your attention again to the closing doxology which was added to it at a quite early date. "For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, for ever. Amen."

Our Lord Jesus Christ wants to encourage us to have this kind of confidence through his teaching on prayer. We can bring to God in prayer everything that is a burden to us in our world and we should then count on his active help. And then too God can be powerful in our weakness - and that is his purpose.

Amen.

III. ADDRESSES

The covenant for jubilee

Bishop Simon Sung-soo Kim
Chairperson,
National Council of Churches in Korea

Welcome to all of you, our friends, who have come here to Seoul for the World Convocation on Justice, Peace, and the Integrity of Creation. We Korean Christians feel joyful that we can be your hosts, and we are praying for a successful Convocation.

During the last two decades, the Korean churches have learned true Christian solidarity and love in Christ, through our ecumenical movement for democracy and human rights in Korea. Through this experience, we also found the truth that the Word of God is being incarnated here, and now in our history, and that Christian mission requires us to commit ourselves faithfully to the call of God. Above all, we have realized that the power of solidarity in love is more powerful than any other thing, and this has made us confident of God's action in this world. Nevertheless, we confess that most of our churches are not yet faithful enough to God, and moreover, that the church itself is often at the head of all the evil forces. We should have the courage to confess that we, the churches, are sinners in the world. We believe that this confession is what has brought us together here.

Throughout our long history, Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation, the theme of this convocation, have been the hope and dream of the Korean people. Due to the geopolitical status of the Korean peninsula, our nation has suffered many invasions by the Big Powers which surround us. In this history, *shalom* became the main theme of our folk songs and stories, and *han*, which is the emotion caused by oppression and injustice, became a traditional sentiment of the minjung. Up to the end of the Second World War, the Korean people were under the yoke of imperialism, and immediately after liberation, we were separated into north and south. This division has become the root of all injustice in north and south. Unfortunately, throughout the period of the division, the arms race has never been stopped, and this has become a heavy burden upon our people. Due to the long-term exploitation of nature by the colonial power, and rapid industrialization without economic justice, today the balance and

harmony between nature and human beings is seriously broken. Our country, known as "the land of beautiful scenery" has deteriorated dramatically under the so-called "economic miracle".

Therefore, Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation are the aspirations of all Korean people; and at the same time, since the Korean churches have identified with the fate of the people, these aspirations are also the subject of all Korean Christians' prayers. On the occasion of this Convocation, we hope to hear the various witnesses from different contexts, and to share all of the sufferings and pains of all creatures and all life. We know that this the fate of this world is at stake. But we also know that without the perspective of the victim, this world can be falsely shown as going forward to a hopeful and ideal future. Historically, we are confronted with the theology and confession of the dominators, which justifies the present reality and requires our commitment to serve it. To overcome this, we must hear the outcries of the *minjung*, the down trodden poor, because our Saviour lived, worked, and was crucified among them, and was resurrected to become their hope and their life. We, the Korean churches, remember that our God is always working with them, and that their sighs and laments have awakened our benumbed minds to realize our mission in this history.

As for Koreans, March is a momentous month. Seventy-one years ago, the Korean people cried out for liberation from the Japanese colonial rule. They demanded independence, for the life of our national people, and their action was peaceful. As a result of their demand, thousands of people, including many Christians, were imprisoned and walked the way of death. Even though some criticized their way of action, it has become a strong tradition of the people's struggle. Korean Christians experienced the true event of Exodus at that time, and confessed our faith in God. Already at that time, our forebears were hoping for solidarity for peace and justice. Today we are participating in the JPIC Convocation. We believe that the spirits of our ancestors, who were victims in the 1919 March 1st uprising, are also participating in this meeting. Now is the time for us to commit ourselves before God.

Together with our sisters and brothers from around the world, Korean Christians are praying for the realization of the Jubilee year. We believe that the division of the Korean peninsula is a typical expression of our world. Division is an original sin for Koreans, in the sense that it causes deep injustice and antagonism. The division is an oppression because the Korean people are its innocent victims. Korean Christians believe that reunification means not merely integration, but a new creation which will be realized directly by the intervention of God. It will be real reconciliation. Praying for the Jubilee year, we dream that all of the

barriers dividing people by sex, race, and class, will be broken down. Praying for the Jubilee, we hope that the Image of God may be recovered and that apartheid may vanish.

Even though many foreign people consider the reunification of Korea with scepticism, for the Korean people, it is not a possibility but a conviction. Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation seem difficult tasks, but in the eyes of the victims of the existing structures and order, peace with justice is already a reality in their life of struggle and ultimate conviction. We hope that this Convocation may become an occasion to confirm this conviction and to renew our covenant with God. May God be with us here and give us the wisdom to lead the world to Life!

The word and the world

Welcoming Address

Stephen Cardinal Kim
Archbishop of Seoul

My dear brothers and sisters! As the Catholic Archbishop of Seoul, I feel very happy and honoured to have this opportunity of greeting you all today. This World Convocation is concerned with the vital themes of Justice, Peace, and the Integrity of Creation. These are fundamental conditions for truly human living and represent the aspirations of countless people in every part of the world. Therefore, you have come to Seoul to reflect on them from every continent, representing numerous churches and organizations. Your concerns are the concerns of very many people in the contemporary world. May God, who loves us all, and desires the salvation of all, pour out upon you the abundance of his grace by the Holy Spirit.

Today, for us of the Catholic Church, as for so many Christians, efforts to promote Justice and Peace in human society are clearly seen as being constitutive elements in the Church's fundamental mission of evangelization. There are so many crosses that light up the sky in the evenings in Seoul. There are certainly many church buildings here; if only all these churches were united in the search for justice and peace in our society and the world, if only we were putting as much energy into promoting the respect of nature as into running our church organizations, then I think the Kingdom of God would not be far off! But it is not so. I think that we still need to reflect much more, and act more courageously, on the question of the Church's presence in society.

In addition to the familiar challenges of Justice and Peace, you are also reflecting on the theme of the Integrity of Creation, the right relationship we must find with the natural world of God's Creation all around us, that natural order out of which we are born and in which we must live.

That theme, too, is no recent discovery. We feel, instinctively, that the words of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount about the birds of the air and the lilies of the field (Matt 6, 26-28) are an indication of his profound unity with the

natural order. It is in this context that we have to understand the title "Prince of Peace" often attributed to him. And last year the feast day of St. Francis of Assisi, called so often "the Apostle of Peace", marked the beginning of the Catholic Church's 44th International Eucharistic Congress, held here in Seoul with the theme "Christ our Peace". At the Solemn Mass of the Congress, His Holiness Pope John Paul II said that "the Eucharist is the Sacrament of Christ's peace" and went on to say that the Eucharist compels us to give thanks for the created world, and respect and share it in a wise and responsible way.

That is very true. I really believe that the unity with nature manifested by Christ and by his Apostle of Peace, and demanded of us by the Eucharist in which we make memorial of Christ, must be our guides to a truly Christian attitude towards the Creation.

It seems that we must reflect again about the charge given in the beginning of Genesis, when God gives the command to "conquer" or "subdue" the earth (Gen. 1,28). Too often these words seem to have been put into practice in a dynamic but ultimately destructive way. There is a contradiction here: how could a "Christian" attitude ever be a destructive one? God's will is blessing, not cursing, and that must guide us in our search for God's way at the present time. No greater blessing can come than the blessings of justice, of peace, and of harmony between all human beings and the natural world we live in.

It is sometimes argued that the traditions of the East, untouched until recently by Christian influences, exemplify a deeper harmony with nature, are more contemplative than those of the West. Yet at the same time the Orient has for long appeared less dynamic in its approach to nature, seeming to show a lack of initiative, to be "passive" in the face of what exists, and lacking in initiative to change or develop nature.

It is my hope and prayer that these traditions of East and West may complement each other and that, as the will of the Creator God who established humanity as lord over all things is fulfilled, we shall all be brought closer to a world overflowing with justice and peace.

So I would like to share with you a poem by a contemporary Korean poet, Ku Sang. His poems, written within a deeply Oriental tradition, offer expressions of harmony between humanity and nature, as well as of the discovery that faith in God's presence is awakened through contact with nature. Today we need a vision, a poetic, mystical vision, that will guide us in our search for a renewed understanding of the world around us:

> As the cataract of ignorance falls
> from off the eyesight of my soul,

I realize that all this huge Creation
around about me is the Word.

The hitherto quite unattended fact
that these familiar fingers number ten,
like the encounter with some miracle,
suddenly astonishes me

and the newly-opened forsythia flowers
in one corner of the hedge beyond my window
entrance me utterly,
like seeing a model of Resurrection.

Smaller than a grain of sand
in the oceanic vastness of the cosmos,
I realize that this my muttering,
by a mysterious grace of the Word
is no imagined thing, no mere sign,
but Reality itself."

(Ku Sang, "The true appearance of the Word". English translation by Br. Anthony of Taize)

I pray that God will bless you and your sincere reflections. It is a divided world and a dividing world: the challenge that faces you demands a deep unity in Christ. I pray especially that Christ's uniting Spirit will guide all your debates into paths of harmony and peace, wisdom and holiness.

Thank you.

The commitment of the Korean churches for "Justice, peace and the integrity of creation"

We in the Korean churches are very glad to be hosting the "World Convocation on Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation" in Seoul, and we cordially welcome all of our brothers and sisters from around the world, who share with you our determination for the development of the JPIC process.

We hope that the JPIC process, incorporating the meaning and historical manifestation of the shalom which is God's promise to us, will bloom in the world from the Seoul Convocation on. And we ask all the churches, and our brothers and sisters around the world, to participate fully and responsibly in the building up of a new "era of *shalom*."

The Korean Christians and churches have decided to contribute to the building up of a just peace throughout the world through the realization of the reunification of the Korean peninsula, overcoming the pain of national division; and to join in the efforts for the restoration of the integrity of creation. It is a great pity for us that for whatever the reasons, our brothers and sisters in North Korea could not attend this convocation. We hope that they are praying in their land for this convocation of peace to be a fruitful one.

We believe that God's promised shalom has already been achieved in Jesus Christ. We affirm that we are in a community of shalom in Christ. We believe in the power of the Spirit which identifies with, consoles and gives life to our "groaning creation", all those who are suffering from injustices, enmity due to militarization, ideological hostility which destroys peace, and the threats to life caused by pollution and the devastation of nature. We hope that the liberating Spirit of a just peace may fully present itself in this JPIC Convocation.

We hope that the World Convocation of JPIC will be a milestone toward the recovery of the integrity of nature, the source of life for all creatures, by denouncing the unjust realities, planting seeds of justice, making initiatives for peace, and revealing the situation of environmental devastation. We have proclaimed a year of "Jubilee", a year of grace to give hope to the world as well as to challenge it. Our planned Jubilee year is 1995, the 50th anniversary

of our national division, which should become the year of "Jubilee for national reunification through just peace" for us Koreans.

For Koreans, the Liberation in 1945 was the first but uncompleted liberation, for the ending of the Japanese colonial rule led straight a way to the national division. Therefore, the national reunification which we are aiming for through the Jubilee year will be the second and genuine liberation for Koreans. We hope that all the participants in the convocation will join us in our efforts for Korean reunification, which will not only be a time of joy for us, but will also express the "global Jubilee" which should be celebrated by all of our brothers and sisters around the world.

1 We want you to know that Korea was divided as an "innocent scapegoat" of the superpowers in their struggle for world hegemony. The US, which proposed the division of the Korean peninsula; the USSR, which accepted that proposal; and Japan, which gave the cause for that proposal through its 36-year colonial rule of the Korean peninsula and its defeat in the war, must recognize their sin and responsibility in relation to the Korean people, and compensate for this through their concrete actions of repentance. The Korean division is an unjust structure enforced upon the people against their will, and therefore is an evil structure, suffocating peace. We urge that the churches in the US, USSR and Japan confess their part in this sin and take the lead in actions of penance.

2 We confess our own sin, that we have accepted and justified our national division as fate, rather than resisting together with the people and churches in North Korea against the "yoke of slavery", the unjust reality of division, and working actively for real liberation. The hostility between South and North Korea took us through the tragic Korean War, with the rigid communist policy in the north and rigid anti-communism in the south, these ideologies penetrating politics, society, culture and thought on both sides. We must accuse "anti-imperialism and anti-communism" as domination ideologies and resist both; we must try to dissolve the mutual hostility in order to form a national community based on reconciliation, responding to the new era of detente and co-operation.

3 We urge an end to all the provocative military actions which deepen the structure of hostile division. The "Team-Spirit" exercise by the US and South Korea and the counter-military exercise by the USSR and North Korea must all be stopped. All the nuclear weapons deployed in the south, which belong to the US army, and all those of the USSR in Siberia, targeted on the Korean peninsula, all of these spearheads of modern war, must be removed and destroyed. These tools of genocide despise justice and destroy peace. We urge all our brothers and sisters of churches around the world to contribute to the building up of peace in the world by committing themselves to support

our efforts to make the Korean peninsula a nuclear-free zone. The nuclear weapons to be removed from the Korean peninsula and its vicinity must not then be moved to other places of the world. They must be safely destroyed Such action will contribute to the dismantling of the Cold War structure and to the realization of a more co-operative era. And we urge you to actively participate in and contribute to the moves for replacement of the ceasefire agreement with a peace treaty in Korea.

4 We urge that the national self-determination should be secured and respected internationally. Unjust, foreign military and political intervention must be eliminated. We urge that the unjust stationing of foreign military troops in Korea be stopped. The military vacancy caused by the withdrawal of the US Army from the South should not be replaced by Japanese military forces or by the strengthening of the military power of the South. Instead, it must lead to a mutual arms reduction between the South and the North, because we believe that the structure of mutual agreement for peace through the reduction of hostile military confrontation is preferable to the policy of deterrence of war through power games. We ask you to help us in our efforts to achieve the phased withdrawal of the US Army from the South and therewith the mutual arms reduction between both parts of Korea at the same time, whether full-scale or partial, for our national sovereignty and for the settlement of peace in Korea.

5 We pronounce that the reunification of Korea should begin with a just peace and should continuously pursue that peace. This means that the national reunification movement in Korea must be based first on solidarity with the powerless and poor minjung who have been deprived of their human rights under the sacrificial structure of division, blocked from meeting their separated family members, and sacrificed under economic inequality. Our solidarity must be with them, not with the rich and powerful who have benefited by the unjust division. We believe that under the situation of sharpened conflict between the poor and the rich, between the ruling and the ruled, real peace can happen only when we accept and embrace the poor and oppressed on both sides.

6 We affirm that our solidarity with the poor and powerless minjung is more than simple charity or sympathy, and that it demands the repentance of the rich and powerful. The poverty in the Third World is the result of the huge accumulation of wealth by the First World. This is a challenge for repentance by the First World, which is indulging in mammonism, rather than a call for economic development projects for the Third World. From this challenge, a just community will be born. We believe that economic justice will be realized by ending the unjust accumulation of wealth by the rich, which is the structural cause of poverty, rather than through charities for poor minjung. In particular, land must not be an object for monopolistic

possession by the rich, but a gift for egalitarian public ownership, for the land belongs to God. Therefore, we will dedicate ourselves to the implementation of a "public ownership of land", based on Christian stewardship. We believe that land possessed by multinational corporations and land forcibly taken by white occupants from the indigenous peoples must be given back to the poor minjung and the indigenous of the land.

7 We urge the development of peace industries which give life, rather than industries of pollution which bring death to the land. Believing that the natural environment is not the object of conquest by technology, we want to work for coexistence in harmony between human beings and nature. Particularly, we perceive that the uncontrolled wasting of energy, the dangerous proliferation of atomic power plants, and the release of harmful waste will not only harm nature and life but will also leave a damaged natural environment to our descendants. The global resources are not to be used up for our pleasure but must also be shared with the following generations. This may be one necessary aspect of distributive justice.

8 We urge the Church, the body of Christ, who is the Lord of our peace, to be a community of just peace; and we proclaim that we will devote ourselves to working for this. a) Sexism is against the peace of our Lord. Women suffering under the situation of national division is particularly serious. War widows and women from separated families have suffered double pain under the national division which made them widows and the patriarchal practices which restrict their remarriage. b) We must make the Church a just peace community in which women's full participation in the decision-making is guaranteed. The Christian Church must develop structures in which youth and children participate in the decision-making processes subjectively, for they are not subordinates of adults but sub-heirs of the future. And finally we affirm that our common task must be not only solidarity with the "poor churches" but also self-renewal for peace in solidarity with the "churches of the poor for theirs in the kingdom of heaven".

JPIC: A call to faithfulness

Keynote Address

Frank Chikane
South Africa

I INTRODUCTION

Chairperson, Sisters and Brothers who have come from far and near; from the South and North, from the East and West; who have come from different confessional, religious and political backgrounds; from the outmost parts of the world: Grace and Peace be with you in the name of our Lord, the God of Justice, the God of Peace and the God of Creation.

I would like to start by thanking the World Council of Churches (WCC) for according me the privilege of delivering a keynote address to this historical World Convocation of Churches on Justice, Peace and the respect and care of the Integrity of Creation.

I would also like to thank you for your patience and understanding for my failure to make available my address on time to be part of your conference material in many of your languages. Some of you may be aware of the pressing commitments at home, including the recent dramatic events which led to the release of that remarkable, amazing and incredible leader of our times, Mr. Nelson Mandela, who spent 27 years in jail for his commitment to justice and peace in apartheid South Africa. These pressing commitments made it impossible for me to keep the deadlines of the organizers of this convocation.

But above all I would like to thank the Lord for having kept me safe to be able to speak to you today and to be part of efforts to address this new global kairos facing all of us at this time of the history of the world. For those of you who do not know much about our situation in South Africa, it should be strange that I make so much of an issue about having made it to this convocation. The fact is, I come from a racist white minority ruled country, which is ravaged by war with murder squads on the rampage. In the face of brutal attacks on those who are opposed to the system of apartheid; in the face of assassinations and mysterious disappearances of

key leaders of our society, where one says "thank you Lord that we are still alive" in the morning, it is not a routine thanks but it is an expression of our reality. Today some of us always stop and wonder how we have survived this far.

We are meeting here today as a result of the 1983 Vancouver Assembly of the World Council of Churches demand to "engage member churches in a conciliar process of mutual commitment (covenant) to justice, peace and the integrity of creation". As you may know the WCC broadened the participation in this conciliar process to involve as much of the totality of the Church of Christ in the world as possible by extending invitations to the Roman Catholic Church the Christian World Communions, and to regional ecumenical organizations. The WCC also invited other churches which are not members of the WCC. From this broadening exercise and the invitation to people of other faiths it is clear that the WCC is conscious of the global implications of the threats to life on this planet earth, threats which transcend all these boundaries.

From the work done this far on Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation (JPIC) there is a clear process of convergence on these issues on the basis of which all of us, from different churches and traditions, can express our mutual commitment to stop these threats to life in obedience to our common Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

We are called at this convocation to:

(a) identify together the major threats to life in our besieged planet today;
(b) make theological affirmations on the issues of justice, peace and the integrity of creation; and
(c) make and propose to churches acts of mutual commitment in response to these threats to life and on the basis of our faith commitment.

The Preparatory Group saw this convocation as a "place", firstly, where churches (and I would like to add, grassroots church people) would agree together to engage in the struggle for justice, peace and the integrity of creation across confessional and geographical boundaries; and, secondly, that it would be an "occasion" to make common theological affirmations which will bring together the three issues of justice, peace and the integrity of creation as a basis for making common commitments.

2 THE CONTENT OF THE CALL BY THE VANCOUVER ASSEMBLY

But why was this call made? Why at the 1983 Vancouver Assembly? I believe

that to understand the seriousness of the urgency of the situation facing us, we need to recap on the global crisis which was and is still facing the entire created reality on this planet earth with serious possible consequences for the universe.

When the WCC made this call in 1983, it was clear that the world was facing one of its worst crises ever in history. The Vancouver Assembly more than ever before, posed in bleak terms the converging global dangers and threats to life facing humanity and our planet today. All signs indicated that the world was fast heading for its own destruction. As the Draft Document for this convocation puts it, the world is faced with "entrenched and deadly forms of injustice", "universal violence" and "a disintegrating natural order."

2.1 Violence and deadly forms of injustice

At the time of the call, there were reports of wars and rumours of wars, causing untold misery to millions of people particularly in the Third World. Millions of people were displaced or turned into refugees. The militarization of the world reached alarming proportions and the threat of nuclear war and destruction came as close as a panic button. The Cold War between the West and the East was used not only to divide the world into two ideological camps but the world was violently forced to belong to either of the two camps.

The country where we are meeting today and its northern counterpart are a living witness of this forced alignment with existing systems without being allowed free choice to develop new models of organization of society which would approximate, for us, the Kingdom of our Lord. The absence here of our brothers and sisters from the Democratic Peoples' Republic of Korea and others from various parts of the world who have been excluded from this convocation for one reason or another, is a telling reminder of the crisis we are facing.

Over the last forty years or so the Cold War has been used to justify ravaging mostly countries in the Third World and turning them into the battleground of the superpowers. The Cold War was used to subjugate us and exploit us. In South Africa, for instance, the so-called Christian West supported an oppressive, inhuman and racist regime, and made enormous material gains and profits at the expense of the death, pain, suffering and misery of our people, on the pretext of combating communism. Many of such regimes around the world were assisted to develop what is called total security doctrines or strategies against the poor and oppressed, what in Korea you would call the *minjung*. The Vancouver Assembly saw the concept of national security as blatantly misused "to justify oppression, foreign intervention" and "spiralling arms budgets". In most instances

all this was done to defend, secure and advance the material (economic) interests of the rich and powerful minority in the world.

As a result of this war psychosis there were gross violations of human rights. In South Africa, for instance, opposition to the racist apartheid system was classified as terrorism and as the furtherance of communism. Thousands of innocent people were detained, subjected to extreme forms of torture, torture even up to death, and many of them were sentenced to many years of imprisonment. Mr. Nelson Mandela and many others are living examples of this experience. Between 1984 and 1986 about 30,000 people were detained without trial, 10% of whom were children under 18 years including 8-year and 11-year olds. Thousands of our people were killed "en masse" at Sharpeville (1960), in Soweto (1976), in Uitenhage (1985) and many other places by the apartheid police and army. Recently government sponsored death squads, which are responsible for the assassination and disappearances of many leaders of people's organizations opposed to the apartheid system, have been uncovered. In this regards, we were reminded of the cries of the Argentinian mothers, the death squads in El Salvador, the reign of terror in Pinochet's Chile and Baby Doc's Haïti. We became conscious of the fact that the racists in South Africa learned from American backed oppressive regimes in Central and South America. They learned and perfected the so-called counter-revolutionary strategies; national security doctrines and methods of low intensity conflict.

The Road to Damascus, a statement made by Christians from seven countries that are characterized by violent repression of those who oppose oppressive systems, is one of the latest attempts to expose these systems and their interconnectedness. This convocation, therefore, is seen by many Christians who have suffered under these unjust, brutal and repressive regimes as a culmination of the life and death struggles they have waged over a long time for a just peace in the world. The oppressed peoples of the world were beginning to raise serious questions about our faith and hope. The faith of many was beginning to wane in the face of this enormous pain and suffering of the people. This convocation therefore has come as a ray of hope that God indeed is alive and cares about us.

One of the issues that was confronting the 1983 Vancouver Assembly was the problem of the oppression and exploitation of women both in society and in the church. This matter was put on the agenda of the church because of the growth of women's resistance movement in the seventies and eighties which challenged sexism in the world. The most surprising issue of the struggle of women is that even those who were engaged in liberation struggles around the world were not chided by this blatant form of oppression. For instance, those who grew up with black theology

in South Africa and addressed racism failed to detect discrimination against women until the first part of the eighties. This made us realize just how hypocritical we can be in our struggle for justice and peace in the world. The fact is any freedom without the freedom of women is no freedom at all.

2.2 The unjust economic order and poverty

At the time of the call for this convocation it was clear that the gap between the world's rich and poor was becoming worse rather than better. Whilst the eighties for instance was a decade of economic resurgence and recovery after the economic turmoil of the seventies; for the poor, particularly in Africa and Latin America, the eighties have been "an unmitigated disaster, a time of falling earnings and rising debt, of fading food supplies and rising death rates" (see Durning's paper on "Poverty and Environment: Reversing the Downward Spiral" in *Worldwatch*, Paper 92, November 1989). Durning brings the disparities between various classes of people into sharp focus by grouping the world's nations into four classes based on their 1985 per capita income. Wealthy nations over the period 1950 - 1988 almost tripled their per capita incomes. Middle income countries more than doubled theirs before the beginning of the 1980 stagnation. The poor nations experienced some rise. The poorest countries remained effectively at the same level since 1950, and we know that women and children are the hardest hit in this regard.

Development theories of the 1950s and 1960s were tried but because of the unjust international economic order those theories and methods failed dismally to address the problem of poverty and the increasing economic debt. An attempt to introduce a New and Just International economic Order by the Non-Aligned Movement was rejected outrightly by the rich nations who benefited out of the deprivation and debt burden of the poor nations. Instead, between 19801988 structural adjustment loans were introduced, but these measures proved to take far longer and were more arduous than originally expected, and may have caused more bread riots than cases of economic rejuvenation. By the end of 1988 countries in Africa, Asia, the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean owed about US $1.3 trillion to western banks, governments and independent financial institutions.

A further attempt was made by the US Treasury Secretary Nicholas Brady to address this crisis in 1989. But this so-called Brady Plan, in my opinion, is a far cry from the radical structural changes necessary in the whole International Economic Order to create a balance of justice in the economic system for the world.

The scandal of poverty can be best understood in the context of the

expenditure of humankind on armaments and war as referred to in the Draft Document for this convocation. It is indeed a scandal, a crime and a shame for our generation and that of our fathers and mothers.

A closer study of poverty in the world and the debt crisis shows that these two are related. It can also be shown that they are related to gross violations of human rights and justice and that they threaten peace and democracy in many parts of the world. We shall refer later to the effects of poverty and the debt crisis on the integrity of creation.

2.3 The disintegration of creation

The disintegration of creation as it is outlined in the Draft Document of this convocation makes depressing reading indeed. It reminded me of the effect of the threat of nuclear war in Europe on some young people who became demotivated and demoralized about life in the face of this looming nuclear destruction. There was a feeling of despair and hopelessness.

The greenhouse effect and the destruction of the ozone layer are frightening realities. The threat of the warming effect and the related possibilities of rising seas, of changing climatic conditions, resulting in droughts, changing of rainfall patterns, causing possible failures in harvests; the pollution of air and water; the depletion of non-renewable resources; the limiting of land use to the majority of the poor of the world; the problem of deforestation; the dumping of toxic and nuclear waste and the threatening nuclear testing; the misuse of the knowledge of genetic engineering; all these suggest a gloomy picture for all of us, and this time it is all of us, rich and poor, powerful and weak, from South to North, East to West.

Alan Durning, in the paper I referred to, shows how, even if the poor again would suffer most and that they would be the first victims, the destinies of all this time, the rich and poor are interlinked in this regard. He says that "most of the world's looming environmental threats, from groundwater contamination to climate change, are by-products of affluence", whilst on the other hand "poverty can drive ecological deterioration when desperate people over-exploit their resource base, sacrificing the future to salvage the present" (p. 40). He goes on to dramatize this unavoidable relationship by saying that

> "... There is no doubt that if destructive environmental trends are not controlled, many millions more will be pulled into the maelstrom. Conversely, if the global poverty trap is not mantled, there will be no way to control the growth of deserts and disappearances of forests, to protect hillsides

> or wetlands, or preserve the diversity of life on earth" (pp. 53-54).

After addressing the problem of poverty, economic justice and environment, Durning makes a remarkable conclusion. He says:

> "Today, poverty is no longer not only intolerable from a moral point of view. Failure to end this scourge will not only stain the history of our age, it will predestine the destruction of much of the shared biosphere. For, although environmental damage penalizes the poor more consistently and severely than it does the rich, the downward spiral eventually becomes a circle embracing all of humanity, rich and poor alike" (p. 67).

He then concludes his paper by saying that "the fate of the fortunate is immutably bonded to the fate of the dispossessed through the land, water and air: in an ecologically endangered world, poverty is a "luxury" we can no longer afford" (p. 68).

The implication of the global convergence of threats to the whole creation brought anew the meaning of the text on Romans 8: 22-23, that

> "to this day the entire creation has been groaning and suffering agony together as if in childbirth, and not merely so, but we ourselves, who have the spirit as first fruits, we also groan within ourselves as we await our adoption as sons, that is our bodily redemption."

But I am encouraged by verses 19-21 that although creation was and is "subjected to frustration - creation eagerly awaits the revealing of the sons of God," and that "creation itself will be liberated from its enslavement to decay into the glorious freedom of God's children."

Before we deal with this hope of liberation and redemption of our bodies and the whole creation, let us deal first with some of the problems which lead us to this desperate and seemingly hopeless situation.

3 THE CIRCLE IS COMPLETE

As I applied my mind to the global crisis confronting us today, it became clear to me that homo sapiens have gone through a complete circle in three ways: (1) a rediscovery of our interdependence; (2) that justice underlines our existence and survival in this world; (3) and that on our own we can be deadly destructive: self-destructive.

3.1 Reality of our interdependence

Our first problem is that we tried to negate God's order of creation by trying to disown one another as if we were not children of the same father, the same mother. Jesus' vision of the meaning of the neighbour was completely lost. We are just like the missionaries of old, or the white Afrikaners of South Africa, or who believed they were called by God to come and preach the gospel to us blacks, admittedly made of the same image of God but not considered "humans." After preaching to us they could not allow us to worship together with them, be baptized together nor partake in the breaking of the bread together. Its illogical conclusion of course would be an apartheid heaven for blacks and whites and a black God and a white God. I believe that we would start a war between the black and white led by the black and white Gods in that apartheid heaven! And, this could be the same with classes, sexes, etc.

Yes, our problem is that we have divided the world into the poor and the rich, black and white, male and female, East and West, South and North. We thought that we could accumulate wealth at the expense of others; that we could secure our freedom at the expense of the freedom of others; that we could ensure our security at the expense of the security of others; that we could win wars and dispossess others and enjoy our unjust victories in peace; that we could survive merely because we were powerful and wealthy.

But these past and present historical epochs have shown that this situation is untenable. Reality has made us rediscover one another as sisters and brothers irrespective of race, class, colour or creed; as God's people. We are being forced to rediscover our common destiny, common interests and the common good which now supersedes all individualistic, egoistic interests. Now it is not just a matter of morality to concern ourselves about one another, but is now a matter of the reality of how God wanted us to live together in a covenant of mutual commitment to one another and to the whole of creation.

An early draft of the document on the issues of justice, peace and the integrity of creation tells us that:

> "The integrity of creation implies that every creature is related to every other creature, as part of one interdependent community. It is particularly important for human beings to learn this truth, for we have thought of ourselves as apart, above, separate from the rest."

3.2 Justice underlines our very mutual survival

As one went through the issues this convocation is supposed to address,

starting from justice, peace and the integrity of creation it became clear that justice is central to all these issues.

The relationship between justice and peace was already worked out by the WCC as shown by its host of resolutions on these matters, that there can be no peace without justice. That peace (*shalom*) is not just the absence of war but that it is the presence of justice. In South Africa, Christians who were burdened and incensed by dishonest calls for peace and reconciliation without consideration of the brutal violence and injustice of the apartheid system declared in the *Kairos Document* (1985) that there can be no peace without justice, and reconciliation without addressing the sin that separated parties.

The contribution of the European Ecumenical Assembly is very helpful in this regard. It starts from Psalm 85 which says "Justice and peace embrace each other"; and they express this relationship as "Peace with Justice" implying that peace without justice is not real peace at all.

Whilst the relationship between justice and peace was already clear to most of us, especially those who have been victims of other peoples' wars and oppressive regimes, there was no clarity on the relationship between justice and the integrity of creation. In fact most of us who come from countries which are ravaged by senseless wars, characterized by gross violations of human rights and by massive poverty and unemployment, the introduction of the item of the integrity of creation on our agenda seemed like a conspiracy by those who benefit out of our poverty and oppression, to divert and diversify our struggle for justice in our situations. It seemed like some people wanted to keep us busy with seemingly abstract concerns about the misuse of biotechnology rather than the real issues like land disposession (particularly of indigenous people in South Africa, Australia and Latin America), racism, sexism, economic exploitation (classism), political oppression, the denial of right to religious freedom and the use of religion as an instrument of oppression and a basis for discrimination.

Of course for a person who is dispossessed of his or her land, who is deprived of rights to exercise responsibility for one's life and future destiny, who is deprived of the rights to participate fully in the government of one's country, who is even denied access to the beaches or beautiful parks of one's country, like in apartheid South Africa, or cannot gain access to these beauties because of poverty; if one knows that it is a matter of time before one is dead with one's whole family, because of hunger then all these concerns of creation become senseless.

For us to deal effectively with the concerns for care of the integrity of

creation we will have to address more seriously the deadly injustices which are practised against the poor and oppressed knowing that our future is immutably bonded together. Our strategies therefore will have to be biased towards alleviating the plight of the poor and oppressed as a priority whilst restraining the affluent from polluting our biosphere. In this way we can stop the poor from destroying the environmental necessities for our survival.

3.3 The cycle of enlightenment is complete!

The third cycle is related to what I would like to call the problem of the period of enlightenment. The period of enlightenment promised a world in which our scientific advances could control and manipulate nature for our use. At the beginning of this period human beings made remarkable discoveries and inventions in the area of science and medicine. Subsequently *homo sapiens* split the atom and produced atomic and nuclear bombs. Soon *homo sapiens* landed on the moon.

David A. Hamburg says :

> "in a brief moment of evolutionary times - since the industrial revolution and mainly in the 20th century - we humans have thrust ourselves headlong into a world of enormous complexity, vast scale unprecedented rates of change, technical and social transformation, brilliant new horizons and weapons of destructive power beyond previous imaginations. Our power for better or for worse suddenly dwarfs everything that went before in millions years of human evolution."

The advances made within a historically short space of time seemed to suggest that humankind could take care of itself and did not need God at all. "Man has come of age", they said. In fact some people began to play God as they entered into fields such as genetic engineering and biotechnology. The need for morality in the ordering of society was seen to be a relic of a superstitious past. This immorality made it possible for science to be utilised for the gains of those who had capital. The best brains in the world were bought and corrupted and made servants of power who battered nature into destruction for the sake of the profits of a few. The view and advice of E.G. White in this regard is helpful. He says:

> "I am pessimistic about the human race because it is too ingenious for its own good. Our approach to nature is to beat it to submission. We would stand a better chance of survival if we accommodated ourselves to this planet and viewed it appreciatively instead of sceptically and dictatorially."

Part of the accommodation to the planet that White speaks about is what the San Antonio Conference on World Mission and Evangelism spoke about when it reminded us that we are stewards of God's creation.

But humanity has not done so. As a result, we have all contributed to the wealth of knowledge in the world, but we are not together able to control that wealth of knowledge and scientific insights. Our crisis today is that we have acquired the capacity to destroy ourselves and the whole created reality. We have accumulated power but we cannot control it. All of us have been reduced into bolts in a huge machine that is turning fast into our own destruction. Through technology and industrial innovations we have disrupted the natural harmony in creation and the balance of nature.

Now we are once more again full of fear of our own creation. We are no more independent and confident about our lives and future. We are now completely dependent on systems we have ourselves created. At one stage in the face of human misery, pain and suffering sociologists and theologians supposed that "God was dead". Today many people, overwhelmed and threatened by their own creation, feel that they cannot handle this situation without God who created this reality. And so the cycle of the enlightenment is completed. We have lost control!

4 CALL FOR CONVERSION AND REPENTANCE

I believe therefore that humanity must face up to its failures, be humble enough to confess them, repent from the pride of playing God, and make restitution. All of us need to radically change our courses. There is need for a radically new orientation and perspective of reality. We must put an end to the vicious circle of destruction of ourselves and the world.

This is where the covenanting process comes in. We need to renew our covenant with God. And this can be done through our covenanting together here to struggle for justice and peace and to restore the integrity of creation.

We need to stop injustice and oppression in the world. We need to stop racism and sexism. We need to stop poverty and the burdening of poor nations with debts they could not conceivably pay. In this struggle for justice and peace we shall be able to jointly address ourselves to the struggle to preserve God's creation.

The great and urgent crisis of our time that has brought us to this Convocation is, as is always for people of faith, also an opportunity. The opportunity that the crisis has afforded us has been to be part of the process that has led to this Convocation. The opportunity of being part of all the reflection, the dialogue, the discussion, the prayer, the revival

and the rekindling of hope that this Convocation should become.

We must thank God that God's Spirit is moving in the Church and that it has moved among us women and men who have become alive to the dangers that confront humankind and all of creation. These have made it possible for us to pause a moment and to remember our Covenant with God. It should be possible in the course of this Convocation and beyond to put in proper focus the fact that when God created humankind and gave humankind sovereignty over the rest of the creation, it was in the context of humanity as a partner with God in the promise and the challenge of the Covenant between God and humankind.

The draft document for this Convocation is therefore totally correct to posit on page 20 that any claim to the possession and mastery of the world is a form of idolatry that should have no place in the community of believers. Our failure as human partners with God through our faithlessness has created dangerous and debilitating divisions in our world that, according to the draft document, "affect the very fabric of historical existence". We are in this Convocation to reverse that process, to restore our faith in God and renew our Covenant with all of God's people. It is the ultimate challenge of this Convocation that we renew our faith in the Covenant of God. It is from God's grace and from renewing God's Covenant that we should leave this Convocation convinced that there is hope for our world towards whose redemption from all evils we all must work for.

This Convocation has, therefore, the important purpose of affirming our faith in the context of our times. It is in times of the present bleakness that those who are not touched by the covenant of our God with us may ask us just where our God is. The promise of our God to walk with us even in the valley of death empowers us to resist the fallacious conclusion that any situation could ever be without hope, including the present status of the creation we have abused.

5 CONCLUSION

Brothers and sisters, we are meeting at a time that communication theorist Armand Matterllart calls a privileged moment in history. The events of the last two years or so create a tremendous feeling of hope for the world and our future. Gorbachev's policies of *glasnost, perestroika* and "new thinking" have seriously impacted on the thinking and attitudes of the world. This move by Mr. Gorbachev has placed the interests of the mutual survival of humanity above class, national group, ideological or any other interest. This has made rapprochement between Moscow and Washington possible. This rapprochement has made it easier to resolve regional conflicts as well around the world. We must thank God that the USSR has

withdrawn its troops from Afghanistan and that the wall of division between the two Germanies has been brought down. We must thank God for the independence of Namibia and the release of Nelson Mandela. We must continue to pray that with the improved relationship between the People's Republic of China and the USSR coupled with the rapprochement between the USSR and the USA, the two Koreas shall seize the opportunity to break down the wall of division between them, make peace with one another and become one nation and one people again. This is imperative, not only for the sake of Korea as a nation, as a people, but for the sake of international peace.
I must say that since Friday when I arrived in this country up to today I have had more bellicose exchanges with the North than real commitments to peace and justice for the whole of Korea. Such a commitment shall be shown by the willingness of all parties involved to accept that the division between the two Koreas was not caused by them but that it was imposed on them by the superpowers for their own interests rather than the interests of the people of Korea. Thus for them to resolve this problem of enemy images and propaganda against one another must end and compromises will have to be made for the sake of peace rather than cling to the old categories framework of thinking. It is my hope that the rapprochement between USA and the USSR will make it possible for us to turn our swords into ploughshares and our gunpower into foodpower. Our hope is also that South Africa will abandon the apartheid system and enter into negotiations to establish a new just, nonracial democratic society. And one would say the same with the Israeli/Palestinian conflict, in El Salvador, Guatemala, Chile, and many others.

Although all this may be an opportunity to establish a just peace and a better climate to concern ourselves about the integrity of creation, it is important to note that a Kairos can be both an opportunity for blessing and a moment for judgement. If we fail to take advantage of this opportunity this feeling of hope could be turned into a period of judgement, we might be swept by the threats of death resulting in the destruction of the whole creation of God. We need to be careful therefore how we respond to this *Kairos*. We need to be aware that this situation provides us in this Convocation an opportunity to help shape the new world order that is emerging.

There are those who look at the unfolding events and have the temerity to claim that we have reached the end of history, that their particular brand of human society has triumphed over its rivals. I would like to argue that the truth is very different. The new Kairos ushered in by Mr. Gorbachev creates a new reality of a definite ideological vacuum in the world that needs to be filled, and thus cannot be filled by old ideological systems. The old must go out and the new must be allowed to come in.

This vacuum provides us with a unique historical opportunity not to fill it with half baked parochial or theocratic ideas. Rather, it provides us with an opportunity to make the world aware of the threats to the whole of creation on the one hand, and on the other to derive from the renewal of our covenant with God, a new mutual commitment and affirmation for justice, peace and the integrity of creation.

I would like to close with a quotation of a motto of a 19th century black newspaper in South Africa, Izwi laBantu (The Voice of the People):

> "Gainst the wrong that needs resistance
> For the good that needs assistance."

I wish you all God's blessings on your deliberations and actions.

IV. MESSAGES

Justice is at the heart of the JPIC process

(Message from the Justice Forum)

We came together in Seoul with the conviction
that justice should be at the heart of the JPIC project
and that people should be at the heart of the JPIC process.
The stories we have shared these past two days
reaffirm the centrality of justice and people.

We have heard about the suffering and struggle
of people from many places:
Indigenous people of the Pacific
Dalits of India
Palestine, El Salvador, South Africa.
We listened with special attention
to the pain of the people in Sri Lanka
and to the plight of Koreans in Japan.
We have learned the many names and faces
of injustice.

But the central issue of justice
we want to put forward during the JPIC convocation
and beyond is this:
the unjust accumulation of wealth and power
in our societies and in our churches.

This accumulation is based on the worship
of capital and profits, at the expense of people.
We use the word "worship" deliberately.
It is the choice of the idols of death
rather than the God of life.
This unjust accumulation deprives people of land,
estranges them from their labour,
reinforces racism, sexism and casteism.
It is maintained and defended at all costs
against the poor,
by the use of four types of power:

political, economic, social and psychological
in a strategy that is misleadingly called
low-intensity conflict.

The spirit, logic and practice
of this unjust accumulation of wealth and power
must be rejected
if the churches want to be faithful
to the Gospel and its call:
"Seek first the reign of God
and its justice."

Indigenous people look at justice
as the heart of the integrity of creation.
We should not reduce "integrity of creation"
to the environment,
much less counterpose it to justice
in a false competition for priority.
People and nature are one creation;
Injustice to one is injustice to the other.

When we destroy the environment
we commit injustice
especially to future generations.
Even when people destroy the environment
because of need (and not because of greed)
their need is itself the result
of another injustice.

The need to pay the external debt
destroys forests in Brazil and Ghana.
The need to feed their families
forces farmers to marginal lands
and destroys lands
because much of their land had been stolen
as in the Cordillera of the Philippines
and among the indigenous people
of the Americas.
The need to cook food forces women
to destroy bushes and trees in Sahel
because they are locked into poverty.

The need to be educated
forces indigenous people to be alienated
from their roots and lands.

The conversion of natural forests
to commercial forests
deprives people, animals and birds
of the source of life.
We cannot condone
the destruction of the environment
even if the immediate reason is need.
But we must condemn the injustice
that forces the needy
to destroy the integrity of creation.

We came together in Seoul
to re-examine our belief that a partnership for justice
must be forged between peoples' movements and churches.

We reaffirm that peoples' movements are the primary partners.
We should not look at people,
no matter how poor and powerless
as mere victims of injustice
or beneficiaries of partnership.
People are the main resource for justice
when they organize, engage in popular education,
develop networks and coalitions
and are empowered to become participating subjects
of their own present and future.

We do not seek abstract definitions of "people".
We know the names and faces
of men, women and children,
workers and *campesinos*,
indigenous people and untouchables
in urban and rural communities.

Peoples' movements cannot limit themselves
to denouncing injustice.
They must assume the responsibility
for creating alternative projects of justice.
This is a difficult task
and we must learn from the weaknesses,
mistakes and setbacks of previous projects.
We do not claim to have found definite alternatives.
But we affirm that any alternative
must keep people at the centre.
They cannot be dislodged and displaced
in favour of capital, power or ideology.

The power of the people
includes the power of their spirituality.
The Spirit has many names
and should not be understood religiously
immediately in Christian terms.
People draw strength from various traditions,
and peoples' movements develop
a deeper sense of ecumenism
as they discover their indigenous spirituality.
For Christians, the centrality of people
is based on the spirituality and theology
of the Incarnation.

We call on the churches to take seriously
this same truth of the Incarnation,
if they are to be partners for justice.
We do not pass summary judgment on churches.
We recognize that they are incarnate
in different, specific contexts
their history, social setting, dominant alliances.
Because of our different experiences with churches,
the JUSTICE FORUM heard a variety of views
on the possibilities of partnership
between peoples' movements and churches.

Some seriously doubt
if churches can be partners
so long as they do not repent
and recognize their complicity with past oppression.
This fact was highlighted by the coming 500th anniversary
of colonization/Christianization of the Third World.
Unless churches recognize and break with
their integration into unjust power structures
they cannot be partners
with the oppressed, the poor, the marginalized
and their struggling peoples' movements.

However, we acknowledge that churches have provided "space"
for peoples' movements in many ways,
not just in ecumenical conferences and networks
but especially in local situations of repression.
Although these churches are a minority,
they are evidence that partnership is possible
and valuable.

We realize that churches
locally and internationally
will not take sides as a whole.
They are more likely to remain
"sites of struggle".

The JUSTICE FORUM wants to address its concern
and urgent call also to the World Council of Churches:
Precisely because many peoples' movements
have been given space and partnership
by various units and members of the WCC,
we participants urge the WCC not to step back
from that tradition of giving space, support and partnership
to struggling people and peoples' movements.

We meet in Seoul
painfully aware that the powers ranged
against justice and people
appear even stronger than before.

We hear triumphalistic proclamations
about the final victory of capitalism.
The failures of the East
are interpreted as decisive refutations
of any attempts at alternatives.
We witness greater aggressiveness
against countries in the South
who dare to seek independence.
There are even efforts to pit
the people of the East and South
against each other
for the paternalism of the powerful.

Many churches rush to new alliances
in the name of "realism".
Even partners find it difficult
to remain faithful.

It is against this background
that we raise the cross of our hope.
We reaffirm our commitment to the pursuit of justice
and the empowerment of people.
We reaffirm the possibility of alternatives
that are more just.
This is grounded in our faith in God's promises

and also in our experience.
Peoples' movements in many countries
keep coming back after defeat,
rise again and learn from their mistakes.
One lesson we must learn well is about solidarity.
Genuine solidarity is essential
to defend our limited advances
and ensure that we keep moving forward.
Enough of token gestures and cheap words!
Those who struggle in their own situations
understand well our sober hope.

We remember the disciples
feeling disheartened on the road to Emmaus.
We remember our martyrs who offered their lives
so that the many may not only survive
but have life in its fullness.
We offer our stories and our commitment
especially to our children
as a heritage of struggle and hope.

Seoul
March 6, 1990

Women covenanting to affirm life

The women's contribution to JPIC

As a response from concerned people of God, to find ways of resorting wholeness out of the experiences of brokeness, the 1983 Sixth Assembly of the WCC held in Vancouver, Canada, gave a call to the churches to engage in a process of mutual commitment (covenant) to justice, peace and the integrity of creation.

Recognising the significant contributions women have been making in their participation in struggles for justice, peace and the integrity of creation around the world, the WCC Sub-Unit on Women has identified this as one of its programme emphases focusing on:

1 Justice for women, reflecting on the issues of violence against women, especially on the feminisation of poverty, women under racism, women refugees and migrant women workers.

2 Women for peace, to affirm the new innovative voices of women as peacemakers, and the new models women offer for engagement in political change.

3 Women committed to caring for God's creation.

At its first commission meeting in 1985 in Mexico, the Sub-Unit on women was mandated to hold a series of regional meetings in Africa, Asia, Pacific, the Middle East, Latin America, North America, the Caribbean and Europe - six of these regions have since had their meetings. The idea was to draw together the perspectives of women from the regions for the JPIC World Convocation in 1990.

In each religion, women in the struggle for justice, women committed to caring for creation and women doing theology came together to share their stories of pain and struggles, their hopes and aspirations to build a better world. Together they explored feasible actions for implementation at each national/regional level as they discovered their power and strength. It has also been seen as the beginning of a common bond of sisterhood and solidarity around the world. The Ecumenical Decade of the Churches in Solidarity with Women, which was launched in 1988 by WCC, is a step

forward to give visibility to women's perspectives and actions in the work and struggle for JPIC. This concern is one of the major foci of the Decade. It is hoped that over the next ten years, the churches will take actions in solidarity with women, so that the vision of a renewed community of women and men would become a reality.

From the discussions held in the different regions, it is clear that women affirm that the issues of justice, peace and the integrity of creation are inseparable and interlinked. The African women elucidate this clearly, "We have come to tell our stories of the injustices we suffer because of the crushing debt crisis plaguing Africa; the terrible human suffering we endure because of wars throughout our continent; the extra burdens we bear because of deforestation, which robs the resources necessary for our very survival; the dangers to our health and that of the future generation, caused by the dumping of toxic wastes, and the scourge of oppression we suffer because of the racist sins of apartheid and colonialism. As African women, we believe that all human beings are created in the image of God and that the gross and continual denial of justice and peace is a violation of the world and the very will of God. As African women we have become the principal victims of injustice, war and the destruction of God's creation".

II The Threats to Life

The threats to life as delineated in the draft document on JPIC all have a very specific effect on women. This becomes clear from the reports of the regional consultations mentioned - where women reflected on these themes from the perspective of their struggles to reclaim and affirm life. The culture of patriarchy that pervades the globe has dehumanised women and men, but has a particularly deleterious effect on women forcing on to their lives the greatest suffering wherever justice, peace creation are violated. Therefore, women's oppression expresses itself with some degree of commonness around the globe - though it obviously takes different forms in different contexts.

In a situation of economic injustice, women are the most affected victims of poverty, hunger and deprivation. Millions of women in the South bear on the backs the burden of feeding, clothing and housing themselves and their families - often single-handed. Women have discovered the trend of the "feminisation of poverty" in all parts of the globe - even in the North. As the European women write, "The new poverty in the richest part of the world is hitting hardest those who are already weak, very young women with children, elderly women, refugees and the migrant women."

Women work double or triple shifts while most men still find it difficult to share in house work, child minding and education, which are essential for the functioning of society. Women's work in the house and the voluntary

work in church and society remain largely invisible.

This devaluation of women's labour is the cry of women around the globe. Added to this, women in the South also pay a heavy price due to the ever increasing foreign debts of their countries - debt from which women derive no benefits, but for the repayment of which their labour and health is sapped from them. Women of Latin America have identified the burgeoning debt crisis as one of the greatest threats to their lives. The problem of women refugees and migrant women workers is also noted by women everywhere.

Racism and casteism (the latter which occurs largely in India) add to the litany of women's oppression placing millions of women in triple jeopardy due to their gender, their economic deprivation and the dehumanising stigma of race or outcasteness. Women of Africa call women "principal victims" due to apartheid in South Africa. The humanhood of millions of women has been diminished in almost every part of the globe due to racist attitudes.

The rapid militarisation of the globe has a specific impact on women's lives. As scarce resources are channelled into the production and development of arms, women's basic needs are neglected (as identified by the women of Asia). Women bear the brunt of the impact of regional conflicts and wars into which their countries are drawn, as is painfully elucidated by the women in the Middle East. Women are often used as prostitutes in bases of foreign armies or women are raped and abused by invading armies.

Apart from this, many nations in Latin America and Asia are governed by military juntas and dictatorships where the state arms itself with the power to suppress people's movements for justice and a life of dignity - women political prisoners are subjected to specific sexual forms of torture and their human and civil rights are undermined.

As a continuum to this the nuclearisation of the globe poses serious threats on women's lives. Women the globe over watch helplessly as we live within the arena of a continuous threat of nuclear catastrophes where weapons are stockpiled or where reactors are built. Added to this radiation affects women wherever testing is done or where nuclear wastes are dumped. To the women of the Pacific, in the name of "security" governments conceal information from people about the effects of nuclear testing or nuclear accidents. They do not allow honest enquiry about these effects to be carried out. Even when information is available, it is not made known to the population at large. The big powers who are testing, transporting and storing weapons and threatening to dump nuclear waste in our region

always claim that there is no danger to us. They use our leaders to support these claims.

All this is the outcome of a global development model which is based on the mastery of the earth and its resources. An over dependence on science and technology for providing answers to all economic problems has resulted in humankind's reckless depletion of the earth's resources and on manipulating human life. The dangerous advantages in genetic engineering, for example, in reproductive technology, can have serious repercussions on the lives of women whose wombs are not being colonised and controlled.

This development model also poses serious damages to the environment resulting in the destruction of forests (as identified by women in all regions) or in the dumping of toxic wastes into the water and lands of this earth. Breathing, due to the polluted air around us, drinking because of the contamination of water resources and eating because of chemicals and fertilisers used in agriculture - basic acts of human existence - are all becoming dangerous, say the women of Europe. Asian women draw attention to the effects of industrial pollution on women's health by trans-national corporations which often flout international safety standards.

This development model has also undermined the knowledge and experience of women as not being analytical, objective and scientific. Women therefore are often left without access to information and are caught unawares when industrial or nuclear accidents take place. Women the globe over have expressed concern about the education system which denies to children the space for creativity, co-operation and intuition.

Women from indigenous backgrounds around the globe - native Americans, Canadians in North America, Maoris and Aborigines in Oceania and in Latin America, tribal groups in Asia and all other like people claim their right to their land.

"Development" has taken away from indigenous people their land, destroying the close spiritual affinity they had with creation - now women of these backgrounds organise themselves and reclaim their lands. This concern has been identified by the women in Latin America.

Women's health has been grossly neglected particularly in nations of the South. Population control programmes have been ruthlessly women-centred, taking away from women their right to informed choices, as has been observed by women in Asia. Too often population explosion is posed as the cause of all problems, overlooking the fact that economic and social justice will ensure small families.

Women identify culture, tradition and religion as having played a significant role in keeping women in a position of subservience denying to them their right to participation. Religious fundamentalism, in all religions, particularly poses a threat to women.

All this results in various forms of violence against women - many of which have already been identified.

In the family millions of women endure a great deal of pain as victims of domestic violence, which women have identified as a common form of patriarchal control.

Women also live under the constant threat of rape and sexual abuse, often as a political weapon to suppress peoples voices Women have become the most marketable commodity in the global market place - prostitution, tourism, mail-order brides, abuse of women by the media, women as entertainers - are the outcome of this.

Women all over the globe have identified the violence they experience as part of the international culture of violence in which this world is submerged. Women of the world are also deeply concerned with the increasing violence against children. Child prostitution, the effects of war on children, child labour, rigid and mechanical education systems are some of the most glaring abuses of children that women have identified. There is deep concern regarding the "messy world" we leave behind for our children.

The elderly as well as people with handicapping conditions are other concerns of women. The threats to life affect these vulnerable groups in very specific ways, and women, who normally take on greater responsibility for caring for the aged and the handicapped express deep concern for the denial of rights to those groups in an increasingly individualistic and consumerist world.

During the last few years a strong feminist paradigm of thinking, analysing and action has emerged throughout the world. This new feminist paradigm has provided the basis for a solid critique of the male paradigm of the "mastery" of people and creation. We are extremely grateful for this awakening of women as it is a sign of hope in our disrupted world.

The feminist movement - even though it takes on different emphases in different contexts - is global. It has as its starting point at the experience of the suffering of women and of their being violated by patriarchy throughout the world. At the heart of patriarchy is the fragmentation of people into body and soul, assigning to the body a lower value, attributing

this to women and assigning the soul to a higher value, attributing it to men and thus legitimising a hierarchy of relationships giving to men power over the lives of women.

This new consciousness of women makes us women search for our roots from the underside of history, bringing to the open the present suffering, struggle and creativity of women, while looking forward to a more holistic vision of life in the future. Doing this in various ways, from different approaches we have expressed our resistance to destructive forces in our world. In this struggle we have been supported by the experience of solidarity and sisterhood.

Feminist theology is part of that movement. Rooted in the experience of women, it has the telling of our stories at its heart. As a new methodology of **doing** theology it takes everyday life as seriously as it does intellectual exercises. Drama, dance, music, poetry and art have all been used to express this new feminist theological paradigm. In **doing** theology in this way, we have discovered the richness of our gifts and of the contribution we can make.

We have also begun a re-discovery of our mothers in faith. Often hidden in the Bible and in the traditions of our churches are the stories of women we can identify with. We have become suspicious of any hermeneutics that neglects this part of our faith heritage.

The rediscovery and re-owning of the Bible and church history have led to a more conscious look at the role in the church. We have through the ages, supported and literally carried the church and yet have hardly ever had a part in leading it. The church needs our gifts to become what it is meant to be: the people of God witnessing to God's presence in the world. Therefore we press for the participation of women at all levels of church life, in order to renew it. Only as an intentional building effort of a community of women and men can be the basis of the Church in the future.

We women have also realised how we have been estranged by the male image of God - this has often been a hindrance to our faith. Identifying God not only as Sovereign Father, but also as mother, nurturer and friend enriches our understanding of the wholeness of God in a broken world. Jesus, born of Mary, accompanied by women who cared for him all his life, loved them (John 11) and called them into discipleship (Mark 16). The Holy Spirit, as the caring one, does have a feminine image:
From this new look at our roots we have developed a call for a holistic expression of our common faith and for inclusive language in liturgy and theology. We are asking the churches whether they have not been ignoring an important aspect of the message of the Bible by not taking seriously the

feminist perspective which is life giving, rooted in the experiences of women.

A new spirituality is emerging among us women in different parts of the world, giving new meaning to lifeless and ceremonial liturgy. We link our liturgical expressions to the real needs, sorrows and hopes of people expressing it in language that is related to their daily life.

We, as women, affirm the pluralistic, rainbow colours of God's creation and seek to discover the liberative strands both in our faith heritage and in that of other great religious traditions, in popular religious experiences of the people and in cultures that have been submerged - particularly in indigenous cultures. We make this search to identify new forms of resistance. Feminist theology is not a theology of women for women. Rather it is a liberating theology for all people - women and men. Its intention is to liberate men from a restriction of theology to the brain and to a mental approach. It points to a more inclusive way of "God-talk" that takes seriously our lives, our body and soul, our emotions and our wisdom as women and men. God's offering of a covenant partnership with us enables us to work towards such a holistic approach to life and theology.

III Women Affirming Life

1 We profess the Triune God as the true sovereign over every human form of power. The courage of Shiphrah and Puah (Ex 1: 15 ff) is an illustration of this affirmation. The two midwives disobeyed the mighty Pharoah and protected and nurtured life, because they feared God.

We can give numerous examples of women around the world who today would as courageously face power and authority so as to protect life. Among them we remember the women of Greenham Common in England and the Mothers of Plaza de Mayo in Argentina. We commit ourselves to work with all women who struggle to usher in a life of freedom and justice for all, challenging every form of destructive human power.

2 We affirm God's particular love for the poor. As Mary magnified God in the song, "He has put down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of low degree; he has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent empty away" (Luke 1; 52ff), she gives witness to God's very specific love and option for the poor.

There are many examples of women around the world, who today would witness to that love. Among them we remember women in the US who participate in the sanctuary movement, hiding refugees from Central America and women working for the poor peasants of the Philippines.

We commit ourselves to fight against poverty and especially the feminisation of poverty all over the world, in solidarity with our sisters who suffer the worst effects of poverty.

3 We affirm the beauty, equality and rich diversity of all races and peoples. The beautiful relationship between Naomi and Ruth points to this affirmation of plurality. There are many differences between these two women - of age (Ruth was Naomi's daughter-in-law) of race (Ruth was a Moabite) and of religion. Yet they were bonded by love and sisterhood which helped them cope with the challenges of life. In solidarity they faced all odds. "For where you go, I will go" (Ruth 1:16) is an affirmation of community that challenges all human categories that divide people.

Women today who participate in the anti-apartheid struggle in South Africa or against the caste hierarchy of India, give expression to this affirmation of a new community, as Naomi and Ruth did.

We commit ourselves to strengthen global sisterhood which overcomes human made national, economic, political, military or cultural divisions.

4 We affirm that both women and men are created in the image of God. The story of the adulterous woman (John 8: 1-11) is an example of the destroyed community of women and men. The nameless woman stands alone, neither her husband nor her lover stand up in solidarity with her. It is men who are ready to stone her to death for what is not in accordance with their sense of morality. But Jesus restores community. He recognises the image of God in this woman. He can forgive her and give her another chance to start all over again. Today, we see women fighting against the sin of sexism all over the world, among them we remember the women of Thailand who struggle against prostitution tourism, and women in the church everywhere who try to restore the community of women and men. We commit ourselves to strengthen the global feminist movement in its struggle against the dehumanising effects of patriarchy.

5 We affirm that Jesus Christ is the truth that sets people free. The Samaritan woman (John 4) is liberated by the discussion she has with Jesus at the well and by the good news that he shares with her. She is so overwhelmed by this encounter that she leaves behind her past life and runs to take the truth she has learnt, to her people.

In the present we see how women struggle for access to education and information, as the women of the Pacific islands who demand to know all that is being done to their homelands and waters by superpowers that test nuclear weapons there. Or the struggle of indigenous women of Australia who reclaim the power of their native wisdom.

We commit ourselves to fight for the establishment of counter information necessary to lay bare the lies of the mass media and to ensure that the wisdom of women is taken seriously.

6 We affirm the peace of Jesus Christ. In an extremely violent context - the killing of Jesus and two other men at the cross - Mary Magdalene, Mary and many other women had the courage to stay there and keep vigil till the very end (Mark 15). Thus they affirmed their love for Jesus and the peace of Jesus in the presence of death and destruction.

The courage of these women in affirming peace where there is death can be seen in actions of women as peacemakers around the world, among them the women of Eastern Europe who played a crucial role in the tearing down of the walls that divided the continent. We also remember the women of the Middle East who struggle for peace and reconciliation from the midst of the rubble of war and violence.

We commit ourselves to engage in non-violent actions for change working with the world-wide peace movements. We also commit ourselves to be in solidarity with women who struggle to break out of the prisons of domestic violence.

7 We affirm that the whole creation is beloved of God. Like the woman who swept and cleaned her house in search of a lost coin (Lk 15: 8-10) we affirm that God cares for even the last little detail of this God's household into which we are placed. Women who care for life and nurture it in the dailyness of their lives, have always been a part of that loving relationship towards all that is, and the whole of creation.

The perseverance of the widow, reminds us of the women around the world who care for God's household. Among them we remember the women of the Greenbelt movement for reforestation in Kenya, the women of the Chipko movement against deforestation in India and of the women who participate in the ecological movement in Western Europe.

We commit ourselves to care for creation. We especially commit ourselves to pay attention to the threats that genetic engineering could pose in the world.

8 We affirm that the land belongs to God. The five women, Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcahand Tirzah laid claim, before Moses and the priest Eleazar, for the land that had belonged to their father Zelophehad and his family (Num 27: 1).

Moses takes this claim and places it before God who says that the daughters

are right. Thus, the daughters gain the right to inherit the land, God makes it clear that no one can take the land away from them the rightful heirs. In the present, the struggle of these women reminds us of the claim of indigenous people everywhere for the right to their homelands. Among them we remember the women of Brazil and the Maori women of New Zealand and the Aboriginal women of Australia.

We commit ourselves to support the vision of a jubilee year so that the land will be given back to the people - the original inhabitants of the land. Actions for life - women meeting in different regions have identified the following actions for life:-

- Identifying the root causes of the debt crisis and its impact on women;

- Highlighting specific needs of refugee women;

- Valuing popular culture as a form of resistance;

- Organising visits with women in El Salvador, Nicaragua and Panama to share experiences and develop concrete solidarity;

- Promoting awareness of women's political rights through formal and non-formal education in churches, women's organisations;

- Urging all governments to continue the process of disarmament;

- Monitoring wages and working conditions for women;

- Lobbying for legislation that control policies around tourism to safeguard sacred sites;

- Fighting any form of sex tourism;

- Resisting any structures that promote racism (specifically of women under racism)

- Facilitating dialogue between church women of North and South Korea;

- Supporting efforts to set up an Asian Women's Commission on Human Rights to mobilise world opinion and monitor human rights

- Violations against women;

- Support women as a political force in peace-making efforts for the establishment of a nuclear-free Asia and Pacific region;

- Monitoring and taking stock of the effects of the growing militarism/ militarisation of the world on women;

- Documenting voices of victims of nuclearisation (women's health);

- Supporting basic educational material on nuclearisation and its effects on people;

- Working towards the stopping of nuclear missile tests;

- Promoting non-violent methods of resistance;

- Exposing harmful effects of toxic wastes;

- Disseminating information on fast-growing trees, tree-planting and solar energy;

- Using scarce resources more carefully;

- Resisting development programmes which further exploit nature;

- Exploring new methods of non-invasive farming;

- Disseminating information on biotechnology and its effects on women;

- Resisting new applications of biotechnology.

Statement of the young people present at the JPIC convocation Seoul - Korea - March 1990

We are the youth, the 7.8% fringe of this world convocation on Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation.

We do not offer beautiful words for the JPIC document. We have already offered lives to the struggle for justice, peace and the integrity of creation. Remember Kwangju, Korea, in May 1980: 2000 young people died. Burma 1988: 8000 died. At Tianenmen Square, Bejing, China, June 1989: a thousand died. Romania, December 1989, with 7000 dead. Remember Chile, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Tibet, East Germany, Lebanon, El Salvador, Philippines, Nicaragua, Sudan, Argentina and so many more. Remember the countless wars, the disappearances, the senseless suffering. This we were a part of, long before JPIC was a programme, a document and a committee.

We are conscious of the dangers of romanticising our involvement in various struggles. So at the same time we must pledge ourselves to more introspection and commitment in our local and regional ecumenical youth movement.

We stand on the threshold of a new age as the postwar world crumbles, and the power to make something new grows each day. Our experiences, fresh, in this time of change are unique.

We have emphasised that our presence here and our opportunity to share with you at this convocation does not reflect our participation in JPIC issues. The coming months and the coming years are a critical opportunity for us to build on the insights of youth, and joining in solidarity in their struggles.

Challenges:
We place before you the challenges we face together:

1 The need to translate our support in concrete terms to networks and

movements that work to build a more just world characterised by peace and reverence for the entire universe.

2. The need to create opportunities for people to develop their capacity to build the future in communities.

We challenge the representatives of the churches and the people to commit themselves:

a) To support youth activities through programmes, organisation, financial assistance.

b) To build the opportunities of youth to contribute to and participate in Church activities and policy-making.

c) To deepen the understanding of young people of their critical role in the JPIC related issues.

The commitment of youth

We, the young people gathered at the JPIC convocation in Seoul commit ourselves:

a) To challenge the youth in the Churches to continued active participation for the realisation of justice and truth.

b) To sharing and disseminating information on:

- Solidarity campaigns and networking
- Racism, sexism and casteism
- Unjust activities of multinational corporations
- Boycotting products harmful to the environment.

c) To the jubilee movement for Korean reunification, against superpower impediments to this, and in complete solidarity with the movements of the peoples.

d) To the struggles of all indigenous and tribal peoples, especially the youth, as they oppose cultural and physical genocide and seek to preserve their identity and their rights.

e) To oppose foreign military and political intervention in any form.

f) To oppose and challenge the policies and activities of IMF, the World Bank, and GATT, which have perpetrated poverty and injustices.

g) To oppose militarization, especially:
   - Patronizing war movies; and making and buying war toys
   - The production and export of armaments
   - Military conscription of youth and children.

h) To decentralize people-oriented forms of development based on self-reliance.

i) To non-conformists lifestyles, that conserve our life support systems - land, air, water and forests.

Ecumenism is the Strength of the convocation

Roman Catholic message of greeting

I am indeed happy to bring greetings and warm good wishes to the Convocation from the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace and the Pontifical Council for Christian Unity. Through these two offices, the Holy See has sent twenty advisers to this Convocation. This is part of the Catholic contribution to the JPIC process. It is a contribution which has been made also through theological reflection, through the secondment of personnel and in other material ways. This already gives practical effect to the words of the Pope John Paul II in his letter on the Social Concern of the Church. He said "We can find (in the Gospel of Christ) a new invitation to bear witness together to our common convictions concerning the dignity of the human being...".

There are many other Catholics present at this Convocation. Some come from Councils of Churches and similar ecumenical agencies where there is Catholic membership, some are invited by the World Council of Churches in view of their expertise in one or other aspect of the Convocation themes. Others are here as visitors or as stewards. Many come from religious orders and congregations, and from Catholic dioceses and parishes. They join me in giving you greetings in this message we have worked out together.

In various ways we have all tried to grapple with the issues of justice, peace and the integrity of creation locally or regionally and in events such as the Basel meeting. We are therefore very much aware that, in our times, many of the life support systems of our earth are being destroyed in an extensive and dangerous way. The magnitude of this threat and the cry of the poor challenge us to witness to Christ by acting together now.

The dehumanizing poverty of millions of our sisters and brothers and the accumulation of wealth by a few, the degrading conditions of work, the social violence against women, children and minority groups, the ecological disintegration, all have their roots in the injustice which prevails in so many places.

Equally we must give ourselves to the promotion of peace. This must be done to the fullest extent possible with other Christians, with people of other faiths and with all people of good will.

Sisters and brothers, with you, we believe in God's fellowship with us human beings which has come about and been made visible in our lord Jesus Christ. This conviction empowers and obliges us to work patiently and humbly for the growth of ecumenical fellowship. We know our need of forgiveness before God and before each other. We are committed to work together wherever possible for justice, peace and the integrity of creation, where we live and work.

We are indeed happy to be here in Seoul and to contribute with you to the Convocation and to share your hopes for the future of JPIC.

As we thank God for the fellowship we share, we pray :

"Lord, make us instruments of your justice
Make us instruments of your peace
Make us instruments for the renewal of your creation."

A message to the convocation

His Holiness the Ecumenical Patriarch Demetrios of Constantinople

The growing autonomy and isolation of man from God in this current period, intensified by the influence of various ideological and sociological systems, has obscured the clarity of the law of conscience and distorted the indissoluble and functional relation of man to the Creator and to the Divine creation. Such a spiritual alienation also specifies the alienation prevailing in his relationship with his fellow-human being. The God - appointed keeper and economist of the divine creation is seeking, as it is well known, to become through his own power its arbitrary master and arrogant administrator, defying with contempt not only its sacredness, but also its absolute necessity for the survival of the human race. Thus he becomes a direct threat for this very life of the planet and feeds constantly the catholic agony for the overarching and threatening danger of an apocalyptic catastrophe to the world, "The wages of sin are death" (Rom. 6:23).

Indeed, humanity, the highest product of the Divine creation, appears today before God as a humiliated, estranged and powerless beggar within its own worldly kingdom.

Indeed, the irrational application of the arbitrary criterion of power, breaks up today the idea of the unity of the human race and of the world and cuts into pieces the superb magnificence of the human person.

Indeed, again, mankind abolishes today the spirit of peace through the madness of imposition and the utopia of domination, imposing further upon it the psychology of fear and war, through which it distorts the fraternal relations of peoples and societies.

Indeed, yet again, the mystery of lawlessness is in operation today and the name of God is blasphemed among the nations through the systematic injustice of peoples or particular social groups.

Indeed, further, the abundance of the rich gifts of God to man is today wasted away through vicious exploitation and unjust distribution.

Indeed, further still, the universal need for social justice and the elementary respect of human rights sounds today as a strange hearing to the ears of the leaders of this age.

Indeed, penultimately, the contemporary phenomenon of the threat of hunger, even to very life itself, is the lot of a large section of our planet with disastrous consequences for every sense of human dignity.

Indeed, it is ultimately the specific responsibility of the Christian world for such multifarious spiritual alienations which are maintained through the dynamic imposition of the principles of the various ideological and sociological systems, which constitute today a common consciousness.

Indeed, the healing of the spiritual and natural evil is today the primary duty of the Christian world, which is obliged to labour in a spirit of repentance and boldness to restore the reason of creation and the reason of the divine economy.

The Orthodox Church expressed such a consciousness in the third Prosynodal Pan-Orthodox Consultation (1986) through her unanimous decision to contribute to the "firm advance of peace, justice, freedom, fraternity and love among the peoples and the removal of racial discrimination." At the same time she underlined the highest spiritual duty of every Orthodox and, generally, of every Christian to work for the restoration of the Christian ideals of peace, social justice and fraternal relations among the peoples: "We, Orthodox Christians, as true learners of the meaning of salvation, are all too conscious of our duty to labour for the alleviation of every kind of illness, misery, and agony. As appropriators of the experience of peace in our life, we cannot remain indifferent for its absence from the contemporary society. As recipients of the benefits of the divine justice, we labour for a fuller justice in the world and for the neutralization of every form of oppression. As participants day by day in the divine condescension, we fight against every fanaticism and bigotry among individuals and peoples. As unceasing heralds of the incarnation of God and the deification of humanity, we defend human rights for all human beings and all the peoples. As partakers of the divine gift of freedom through the redemptive work of Christ, we are able to proclaim more fully its universal value for every human being and every people. As people who are fed with the Body and Blood of the Lord in the Divine Eucharist, we experience in our life the need to share the gifts of God with our brothers and sisters, and fully realize the undesirability of hunger and deprivation, labouring for overcoming them. As people who expect a new earth and a new heaven, where absolute justice shall prevail, we labour here and now (*hic et nun*) for the regeneration and renewal of the human being and of the human society."

The Ecumenical Patriarchate declared through a Message and by virtue of a decision of the Holy and Sacred Synod, that "the first day of the month of September of each year", which is in fact New Year's Day according to the Orthodox tradition, "should be a day of prayer for the protection of the natural environment, in full realization of a duty and of a paternal spiritual responsibility". In this Message "to the Orthodox and Christian world," we stressed that Jesus Christ "united in his Person the created world with the uncreated God and constantly offers the former as a eucharistic offering and sacrifice to the Father. The Church in every Divine Liturgy continues this offering and sacrifice in the form of the bread and the wine which are elements of the created world ... "

Hence, we address a warm greeting and send our paternal blessings to the World Congress of the WCC in Seoul, Korea, for the advancement of pan-Christian unity in the common task of Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation. We wish every success in the deliberations of the Congress and we pray for the possibility to overcome the contemporary spiritual impasse and to restore social justice and peace among the peoples of the earth to the Glory of the One God in Trinity and the salvation of the world.

Message World Convocation on Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation

Seoul, Korea, March 1990

1 **NOW IS THE TIME** to commit ourselves anew to God's covenant. The moment of history is unique. All life on earth is threatened by injustice, war and destruction of creation because we have turned away from God's covenant. Knowing of the opportunities that are offered to us, we ask for God's forgiveness. We witness many hopeful changes.

2 **NOW IS THE TIME** to welcome and confirm the achievements in linking local and regional struggles for justice, peace and the integrity of creation. Our contexts and perceptions are different indeed. Yet we have to overcome our divisions. Among them we must encourage wider support for the churches for people's movements. There are no competitive efforts for justice, peace and the integrity of creation. There is one single global struggle.

3 **NOW IS THE TIME** to consolidate all struggles for justice, peace and the integrity of creation. We must free ourselves from bondage to power structures which blind us and make us accomplices in destruction. Christians have to move out into the world to which Jesus came.

4 **NOW IS THE TIME** to join the struggle of the Korean people for the reunification of Korea and to support their plea and prayer for a Year of Jubilee in 1995.

5 **NOW IS THE TIME** when the ecumenical movement needs a greater sense of binding, mutual commitment and solidarity in word and action. It is the promise of God's covenant for our time and our world to which we respond. Thus we affirm:
- that all exercise of power is accountable to God;

- God's option for the poor;
- the equal value of all races and peoples;
- that male and female are created in the image of God;
- that truth is at the foundation of a community of free people;
- the peace of Jesus Christ;
- the creation as beloved of God;
- that the earth is the Lord's;
- the dignity and commitment of the younger generation;
- that human rights are given by God.

6 **NOW IS THE TIME** for the ecumenical movement to articulate its vision of all people living on earth and caring for creation as a family where each member has the same right to wholeness of life. While this vision is spiritual in nature, it must be expressed in concrete action. On the basis of our spiritual experience here in Seoul we have committed ourselves to work for;

- a just economic order and for liberation from the foreign debt bondage;

- the true security of all nations and peoples and for a culture of non-violence

- for building a culture that can live in harmony with creation's integrity and for preserving the gift of the earth's atmosphere;

- the eradication of racism and discrimination on all levels for all people, and for the dismantling of patterns of behaviour that perpetuate the sin of racism.

7 **NOW IS THE TIME** to recognise that there is a long process still before us. We will take to our churches and our movements the affirmations and commitments we have made in Seoul, inviting others to join us. Together with them we struggle for the realization of our vision. We are accountable to one another and to God. We pray that we do not miss the *kairos* to which we have been led by God.

V: ECUMENICAL DOCUMENTS

Integrity of creation

An Ecumenical Discussion
Granvollen, Norway
February 25 - March 1988

INTRODUCTION

The intention of this document is to engage churches, Christian groups and all people who are concerned about the integrity of creation in a process of study and action.

1 The study on the Integrity of Creation is part of a much larger process. The Vancouver Assembly of the World Council of Churches invited all churches 'to engage in a conciliar process of mutual commitment (covenant) to justice, peace and the integrity of creation'. While the terms justice and peace are familiar, the 'integrity of creation' is new. To be sure, it includes ecological and environmental issues, but goes beyond them. Its central thrust aims at a caring attitude towards nature - an emphasis that is evident in the German *Bewahrung der Schöpfung* and in the French *sauvegarde de la creation.* The English 'the integrity of creation' says more. It tries to bring together the issues of justice, peace and the environment by stressing the fact that there is an integrity or unity that is given in God's creation.

2 At the meeting on this subject, there were many points of agreement. There were also many disagreements. Not least of these was the question of how one does theology. Some thought that one should first examine biblical and Christian theological traditions on the doctrine of creation and then work out the implications of dealing with the critical issues of our time. Others argued that one should begin with critical issues and then address them theologically. Given the plurality of faith traditions and theological viewpoints at the consultation, there were also sharp differences in the understanding of the 'integrity of creation'. The consultation was an exercise in conciliarity - to listen and to be heard so that positions and viewpoints may be in conversation with each other. In a significant way, the consultation tried to be inclusive without lessening the particular emphasis of each entry into what is meant by the integrity of creation. To have striven for less would have been to betray the very concern of the integrity of creation.

3 Yet the document is not exhaustive on all aspects of the Christian doctrine of creation. Neither does it cover all the aspects that could be included under the topic of the integrity of creation. It is tentative and exploratory. Its primary concern is to provide ways of entering into an discussion and to provide 'windows' into what is meant by the integrity of creation. It is, therefore, a paper for discussion and not a position paper to be endorsed by the churches.

EXPERIENCES OF BROKENNESS ....YEARNING FOR WHOLENESS

4 My name is Anna. I am from the Marshall Islands. My people have traditionally treasured our lands and lagoons - sources of our food. My people are a sharing people who live in close interdependence, not only with one another, but also with our atoll homes. Now, however, we are troubled. Many of our young people see no future in life. Our land no longer feeds us. The more we eat of its fruit and the fish in our lagoons the sicker we become. What has happened to my people? What has happened to our land?

From 1946 to 1958 nuclear tests were held in our atolls. Some of these atolls have simply disappeared. Others are still slowly releasing radioactivity into our waters. While our older people are still suffering from radiation sickness, many of our children have genetic defects. We women feel this particularly; we think of our children.

More recently, we have been moved from some of our atolls and crowded together on Ebeye Atoll in order that our atolls could be testing grounds for advanced weapon systems. We have no traditional link with this new land; part of our identity has been taken away. Our dwelling place is overcrowded. We are poor. Our lagoon is a source of disease, not life. Yes, much has happened to our people. Much has happened to our land.

5 This story gives dramatic witness to the consequences of humanity's attempt to 'master' creation: destruction of fish, forests and atolls; pollution of land and waterways; displacement of people from their sacred lands; injury, disease, suffering and death to innocent people. It also draws our attention to the interconnectedness of the issues of justice, peace and the integrity of creation. The story also shows the 'structures of sin' that have assumed power over people and the whole of creation.

6 Throughout its history, humankind has known the tension between living in relation with creation and seeking to master it. However, in the modern era in Western civilisation, and especially through the scientific revolution, the relationship to creation has fundamentally changed. Since the marriage of science and technology in the Industrial Revolution, Western culture has presumed 'mastery' over creation as its God-given

right and duty. Nurtured by the Enlightenment., this presumed prerogative has radically transformed human life and culture, and affected the rest of creation. At the most visible level, this transformation is evident in developments in such areas as transportation, various forms of energy, architecture, health care, technology, communication, fertilization, biochemistry, weaponry, the modern computer, and much more. At more subtle, but no less important levels, the transformation is evident in ideas and ideologies that undergird political and economic systems, values and morality, relationships among and between cultures, relationships among and between nations, between people and the creation.

7 To be sure, science and technology have done much to enhance the quality of life. However, many of these achievements have also seriously affected the earth's ecosphere, threatening its capacity to support life and have put God's creation in great peril.

8 The drive to have 'mastery' over creation has resulted in the senseless exploitation of natural resources, the alienation of the land from people and the destruction of indigenous cultures. It ignores the experiences of oppressed peoples like the Blacks and women who suffer under its weight. It also undermines other highly developed systems of scientific, religious and philosophical thought. For example, Western medicine as it developed and spread over the world began to supplant indigenous systems of medicine which have a more holistic approach to health care and healing.

9 With the industrial mode has come a world view that looks on creation as manageable and at the disposal of human beings. It is a world view that does not respect humanity's dependence on the earth as mother and as the source of life and nourishment. Instead, it views the earth as something to be used and owned by a few, and 'mastered' so as to maximize profits for a few. It is the power of ownership, the power to manipulate and control that is the basis of the industrial profit-centred mode of development. Earlier, Western science and technology with an industrial mind-set made colonization possible, both internally and in relation to nations in the South. Now the mind-set of science and technology has become a universal mode, and has led to a militarization of the globe and a dangerous arms race that threatens many parts of the world.

10 Governments and ruling groups in the South have also adopted similar views out of self-interest and to maximize their profits. Some of the consequences are the grabbing of land from and the denial of property rights to Indigenous Peoples; the control of educational and religious institutions to propagate an ideology of submission; and a relative disregard for human and all other created life.

11 The development of this universal industrial mindset must be seen in relation to the growth in Western culture of a philosophy of dualism, which affirms a radical divide between spirit and matter, soul and body, male and female.

12 Over the centuries, this dualistic philosophy has played a significant role in many Christian theologies, resulting in a belief in a hierarchy of values or in a theory of a chain-of-being that absolutizes human-centred and male-centred creation. The hierarchical view of creation puts women and the rest of creation in a position of powerlessness - to be owned, exploited and violated. Many churches and Christians also subscribe to this world view and uncritically support the economic and political forces which reinforce this world view.

13 Furthermore, the churches by their divisions reflect the brokenness of the creation. The churches have failed to uphold creation's integrity as a primary good and to reflect this unity within their own life. In our time, the church needs to discover its contemporary response as a co-creator with the transforming power of God in a covenant and commitment for justice, peace and the integrity of creation.

Therefore, we celebrate at this time the actions of those who embrace wholeness, and mention the following as representative of many others:

We celebrate the life affirming actions of Christians who participate in movements for justice, peace and the integrity of creation.

We celebrate the women and men who through symbolic actions, like the Day of the Tree celebrated in Benin, raising the awareness of their communities to the strength of united action.

We celebrate the Chipko and Apiko movements in India where women protect with their own bodies the trees that are to be cut down by logging companies.

We celebrate the actions of the Christians in the Philippines who hinder by protest actions the transportation of trees by logging companies exploiting forest resources.

We celebrate the sharing and solidarity women experience in global ecumenical movements like the World Day of Prayer and the Fellowship of the Least Coin, in which they focus on issues of justice, peace and the integrity of creation, and make networks of commitment to work for the wholeness of creation.

We celebrate the actions of church groups and other movements particularly in Europe and North America who have taken up the concern to reduce pollution and to care for the earth. In particular, we commend the efforts of those who seek the reduction of the causes of acid rain, the prevention of the poisoning of ground waters through chemical fertilization of farmlands, and the elimination of nuclear and other hazardous wastes.

The experiences of brokenness and yearnings for wholeness are evident everywhere. Perspectives from the experiences of women, Indigenous Peoples, the ecological struggle, the 'second world' and Peoples of other Faiths are given both to show the pervasiveness of the concern for the integrity of creation and to indicate the variety of ways in which this concern is expressed.

A PERSPECTIVE FROM THE EXPERIENCES OF WOMEN

14 In December 1984, at Bhopal, India, 10,000 men, women and children (according to an unofficial UNICEF assessment) died when the highly toxic MIC (Methyl Isocyanate) gas escaped from the Union Carbide factory, converting the city into a gas chamber. It is estimated that another 40,000 people were seriously inured and a further 200,000 badly affected by partial or complete blindness, mental illness, pulmonary and gynaecological diseases with an increase in the number of abortions and stillbirths. Two years later, reports of the far reaching effects of this tragedy on the population of that city are still coming in. Other forms of life have also been affected. The report is: Creation was broken!

Voices of women speak of the impact the disintegration of creation has had particularly on their lives.

15 When land, air and water are polluted and poisoned, women and children, particularly unborn children, are usually the first to be affected. As the earth is hurt by radioactivity from Chernobyl and Three Mile Island; by industrial chemicals; or by drought, floods, desertification and deforestation, women also suffer as they try to provide healthy and sufficient food for themselves and their families.

16 There is a saying that 'when sister earth suffers, women suffer too'. Violence against nature is violence against women. The reverse is also true; violence against women is violence against nature. Women, like nature, are vulnerable to violation. They, too, can be treated as objects to be used, abused or manipulated. Their sexuality and labour can be exploited. When the earth, the sea, the air, the forests are violated, women also bear the brunt of it. Creation is broken!

17 Both women and creation can be owned by men, objectified and treated as 'the other', subjugated and used for male dominated hierarchies. This has been the prominent philosophy on which the industrial mindset has operated. It has affected the lives of women in all parts of the globe, be it in the North or the South, the East or the West, although there are differences in the levels of oppression women experience in different contexts. In those states which assure a system of social support for women, and especially for mothers of young children, some of the worst effects of industrialism upon women are being partially ameliorated. The oppression of the majority of women caused by the industrial mindset is aggravated by various forms of religious and cultural oppressions.

18 The increasing professionalism and industrialization of health care provide a particularly horrendous example of the violence done to the women of the South. These are used as guinea-pigs for the testing of drugs of unproven safety such as 'injectable contraceptives'. Drugs banned in the countries of their origin are used on these unsuspecting women. They are considered as objects; and their bodies 'used', as nature is 'used'.

19 Women, too, are not free from this industrial mindset. They also participate in the exploitation and abuse of other human beings, of other forms of life, and the environment. In subsistence economies, where basic human survival is at stake, women unwittingly add to the brokenness of creation. When a poor woman's double day's work is further lengthened with the need to search for safe food and water, fuel and fodder, already scarce resources are further depleted without thought given to the protection of the environment.

20 Women and men are called to defend the creation and to heal its brokenness. This call is rooted in hope - a consciousness of the creative and continuous presence of God in the world. This hope is like that of the women who set out on a journey of faith to the grave of Jesus on Easter morning. They anticipated obstacles. 'Who will roll away the stone?' Yet, they persisted on the journey, and met the risen Christ. The hope has as its basis faith in the risen Christ.

21 We are called to actualize this hope in concrete ways. Specifically, we are called to resist the threats to life and to continue to bear new life in spite of oppression and the apparent hopelessness of situations.

22 We are called to celebrate the mystery of creation. To recognize God's living presence in and around us made known in continuous acts of creation in spite of the threats to life. The mystery of creation must be expressed in language and metaphor that arises out of the experience of

women and speaks to women in different cultural contexts. Our image of God is dynamic. It is the image of sharing love that finds expression in the redeeming and healing presence of Jesus Christ. On the cross, Jesus is seen as one who shares his life making whole what is broken. In his resurrection is our hope.

A PERSPECTIVE FROM THE EXPERIENCES OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

23 My name is Mamani. I am an Aymara Indian from Bolivia. Seventy percent of the Bolivian population are Indians from the Aymara or Quechua tribes. Only thirty percent are Spanish or other immigrants. Yet, since the invasion five centuries ago, ruling power has been held by this minority. We have been subjugated and oppressed.

For all of these five centuries we have been exploited by the colonial power as it extracted minerals from its new territories and made great profits. At first we worked the mines as slaves; then as very cheap labour. Because of the working conditions, many millions of Indian workers have died in the mines. Recently this crisis has become even worse. In 1986 under Governmental Decree 21060, the National Mining Company was privatized, new technologies were imported, resulting in 200,000 Indians losing their jobs and further increasing the number of unemployed Indians. Bolivia's huge national debt also adds to the oppression of native peoples.

I see two contending nations in Bolivia. On the one hand, the immigrant minority, identifying itself as Christian, maintains an ideology of accumulation, domination and oppression. We Indians, on the other hand, believe that the gifts of creation should benefit all and that consumption should be limited to what is necessary.

In 1978 I became the first indigenous bishop of the Methodist Church in Bolivia. Our church is struggling to understand itself as both Indian and Christian. For this reason you must understand our traditional view of creation in order to understand us. The whole of nature was created by Pacha Mama, the cosmic God, who guarantees the continuity and harmony of creation. The God of salvation revealed as an anthropomorphic manifestation is Wiracocha. The first time our ancestors saw the bearded Spanish, they called them Wiracochas. But Pacha Mama, the Eternal Mother, is a more maternal human expression. In recent discoveries of the huge construction of the Tiawanaco civilization, the sun and its warmth can be seen as the source of human life.

Our Aymara communities, and those of all Andean native peoples, are participatory. Our sense of community extends to the relationship

between people and all of creation. It includes safeguarding the harmony of nature. If the churches are really concerned for the integrity of creation, then they will have to recover a gospel that is good news for all of creation.

24 Some estimate indigenous peoples to be roughly one quarter of the world's population. By indigenous peoples are meant tribal people who have traditional world views which underscore attempts to live in harmonious and sane ways with the whole of creation. Some examples of indigenous peoples are the American Indians, the *dalits* and tribals of India, Maoris and other Pacific islanders, aboriginal Australians, Africans and tribal Asians.

25 In spite of their numbers, Indigenous Peoples are too easily overlooked. Even the international language categories of first, second and third worlds do not include Indigenous Peoples. They are imposed upon culturally; and they are systematically oppressed.

26 All over the world, Indigenous Peoples continue to suffer from persistent attempts by powerful governments and corporate interests to take their lands. Indigenous Peoples live in dynamic relationship with their lands. They conceive of the people belonging to the land and not the land belonging to the people. Such an attitude makes them easily vulnerable to interests that work with Western notions of the ownership of land. Furthermore, because of the close relationship between land and people, the expropriation of the lands of indigenous peoples is also an attack on their cultures, religions and systems of value.

27 Even the indigenous peoples who live on their own lands are not free. Unjust economic policies have been introduced to protect industries that continue to pollute the land, the water and the air of the indigenous peoples. Agro business in the South has led to the destruction of entire forests. The indigenous peoples in Latin America are being forced by the rich to plant marijuana and coca which are then sold at high prices overseas. In some other places, indigenous peoples are forced to plant only cash crops which are sold to settle payments for external debts. Strip mining, hunting safaris and whaling are other examples of the ruthless intervention in the lives of indigenous peoples. Indigenous peoples experience all these as the disintegration of creation.

28 Indigenous peoples also experience the disintegration of creation in the alienation caused by systems of education and imposed foreign values which are often advocated by churches. The consequent disintegration is evident in high unemployment. For instance, up to 95% in some northern American Indian reservations are unemployed.

Extended family structures also disintegrate and traditional family values are destroyed. While all indigenous peoples are affected, the forced separation of husbands and wives in the Southern African work situation is perhaps the most dramatic.

29 Like other Indigenous Peoples, African peoples also have a relationship of mutual obligation with creation. African peoples play a very active role in caring for the creation and in teaching the young to care for and respect creation and to maintain relations in the community. In Africa, right relations mean justice. Right relations promote mutuality and control over the misuse of power. Women and men in every day life exercise these values, and failure to do so is deemed a disgrace to the whole community. The roots for exploitation and domination of nature and humanity in Africa are in Western cultural imperialism. The rupture and destruction of African cultures have robbed Africa of its identity.

30 At stake in the oppression of indigenous peoples is the balance and wholeness of all creation. The devastation of the earth is inextricably bound up with the devastation of peoples. The destruction of indigenous peoples destroys a fundamental base of spiritual strength and understanding of creation. It is an understanding which still knows the spiritual interrelatedness of all things visible and invisible. This rich spiritual understanding can become a source of renewed strength and rootedness for all people, especially for Christians in their understanding of the Gospel.

31 For the sake of all creation, theology must begin with creation. Just as concerned Christian people have begun to learn that true peace can only be realised through the establishment of justice and that peace flows naturally out of justice, so now we must begin to learn that justice and then peace flow naturally out of a deep respect for all of creation. Thus for indigenous peoples a much more theologically sound expression would be '**Creation Justice and Peace**'. Not only is this more satisfying to indigenous theology, but such a title suddenly begins to reflect the theological content and sequence of the ancient ecumenical creeds of Christianity.

32 We must now clearly understand that justice is the maintenance of the wholeness of creation. Justice involves the righting of relationships not only between human beings, but between human beings and the earth and the things of the earth. Our concept of justice must shift away from being that which protects possessions towards that which provides healing of relationships between human beings, between cultures, and between

human beings and all of creation. The indigenous concept of justice is such a process of healing. If we begin with the perception of ourselves as part of the wholeness of creation and if we understand justice as the practice of human beings in maintaining the interrelatedness of all creation, then peace will flow naturally.

33 The dilemma of indigenous peoples is that at times their only hope appears to be participation in the modern industrial world, which has also become the source of their destruction. There seems to be no way to exist apart from that system; yet that system is what kills them. They are oppressed by it; but even as they turn toward it as a source of salvation, they become their own oppressors. There is a yearning for the totality and wholeness of creation among indigenous peoples. Yet, they too become destroyers of that wholeness as they struggle to ensure their own survival, hemmed in by economic structures which only begin to reward them when they also participate in the devastation of their own relatedness to the earth.

34 In the Gospel of Mark, Jesus proclaims: ' the time is fulfilled. The Kingdom of God is near. Repent, and believe the Gospel' (Mk. 1:15). In this context it is more and more clear that the Kingdom of God is not merely a relationship between human beings and God that has happened or will happen at a particular time. Rather, the Kingdom of God is the space where God reigns. It must be understood as a metaphor for all of creation. In this context repentance (*metanoia*) must be informed by the Old Testament notion of repentance as a 'return' (*shubh*). It is a return to God and to the space where God reigns as Creator. It is a return that brings one back into harmony and balance with God and with the rest of creation. Thus repentance opens new possibilities for understanding ourselves and our place in creation. For indigenous peoples repentance must involve a return to their spiritual source, that is to their land. To block this aspiration of indigenous peoples is to keep them in their sin.

AN ECOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

35 My name is Junior and I am from St Vincent in the Grenadines. Among many Christian people in several Caribbean islands, including my country, it is a tradition to eat crayfish as the main source of protein on Good Friday. This means large numbers of people converge on the rivers on Holy Thursday.

The rivers are open to the public. No government control exists on fresh water fishing. People catch more than they need and the species has been substantially depleted. Of late, the old method of fishing has given place to the technique of spreading tobacco and other poisonous substances in the river which drug the fish, making it easier to catch them.

What is not caught is left to die and pollute the water. The species is fast becoming extinct. Yet this religious custom prevails. Neither the churches nor the governments pay much attention to the problem.

36 My name is Gerhard. Towards the end of the revolutionary 1960s, I became a member of a group of sensitive ecological people from the Evangelical Church of the Federal Republic of Germany. As a concrete commitment to the ecological issue, we started using recycled paper. It saves wood, energy, and water lessens pollution and the amount of waste by-products. First we began to use recycled paper for ourselves. Then we spread the message asking others to use it too. But we have faced big barriers. We were told that people like white paper. Copy machines start 'coughing' with recycled paper. It is too expensive. We were told: 'you use recycled paper if you must, but leave us alone'. However, we did not give in.

Neither were we discouraged. We continued the struggle. We felt that if there is a real demand in the market, then these problems will disappear. It was urgent that we create the need. We started with our immediate situation, namely, the church offices. Now we see the results of our persistence. For example, my church, the church of Baden, uses recycled paper for 2/3 of its paper needs for copy paper, envelopes, computer paper, etc.

37 At the present time the land base of the earth is being threatened by deforestation and desertification, thus destroying the productive capacity and genetic resources of vast areas of the earth. In East Africa, for example, the search for firewood, the chief energy resource for millions of people, combined with the overgrazing of marginal lands is causing the desert to expand and the soil to deteriorate in ways that may be irreversible.

38 In addition, it is estimated that forests in less developed countries will be depleted by 40 per cent by the year 2000. By 2020, less than two generations form now, nearly all accessible forests in the two thirds world would have been cut. This situation is especially critical for the tropical rain forests in South America.

39 Equally important, deforestation is causing the dramatic extinction of plant and insect species. Some scientists estimate that one species of plant or animal life becomes extinct from the earth every hour. All of this depletes the genetic resources and biological diversity that are fundamental for nurturing the process of life.

40 The situation is equally precarious with the earth's water resources.

In a number of countries, the availability of water per person for the year 2000 is projected to be 'very low'. Some of the countries identified as facing this crisis are South Korea, Syria, countries on the Arabian peninsula, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco and Jamaica. Most worldwide use of water is for irrigation. But, while making land fertile to grow food, irrigation also causes negative side effects now being experienced globally. All water contains salt. As the irrigated water evaporates, the salt in the water either remains in the soil or works into the ground water. The increasing salinity of the water and the land is reducing crop yields in numerous Third World countries by 50 per cent.

41 Water for drinking has also become a global problem. The World Health Organization recently reported that in 88 countries in the South, 77 per cent of the people are not being adequately served.

42 Air that is clean, breathable, and capable of regenerating the creation could also be in short supply in the years ahead. There are presently concerns over three threats to the earth's atmosphere: the rising level of carbon dioxide, the depletion of the ozone layer in the upper atmosphere, and the increase of acid rain throughout the globe.

43 In the light of these realities, the Church must engage in technology at its source and not merely at its consequences. This is costly and difficult work. Technology is not neutral or value free; it is as much an ideology as it is a tool of science. It has in fact become an instrument of power and is itself trapped in vast networks of power which are complex, systemic, often multinational, and exists primarily to maximise profit. In New Testament terms 'principalities and powers' have gripped our world, which means our struggle with the misuse of science and technology is essentially a religious one. It also means that the churches' concern for the integrity of creation is more a matter of justice and peace than development aid or charity. From a biblical perspective, justice is the rendering of whatever is required for the fullest possible flourishing of creation. That which makes for wholeness in nature, in the human psyche and in human society is just. Biblically speaking, peace is shalom. Shalom, in fact, is shorthand for all God's hopes and dreams for creation. Peace is shared abundance and full health throughout the world. It is well-being extended to all creatures so that life is without debilitating fear. As the prophet Isaiah has taught us, the result of righteousness is peace. It is tranquillity, serenity and the assurance that no people's security is purchased at the expense of any other people. And it is more. Peace means bread, rice and dance.

44 Empowered by this vision, the churches, in solidarity with all people of good will, are called to make manifest God's justice for humanity and creation, and to struggle for the transformation of the powers that hold

both in bondage. We are painfully aware that we are party to these destructive powers. Yet, we are summoned to witness to the victory of Christ and the freedom from every form of death that he has won for us and the whole of creation. That victory invites our active hope for a new day and a new order of things, when all creation is integrated, and every creature lives in joyful community with every other creature (Jer. 31:31-34; Col. 1:15-20).

45 Human action alone cannot bring this promised new day to fulfilment. It is essentially God's work to be accomplished in God's own time. But in the Spirit, God calls the churches to represent Christ in the world as 'the first fruits of the new creation' (James 1:18). Such witness must be in word and action and will necessarily move the churches to engage 'the powers' of the world which remain unconverted (1 Cor. 2:6-8). This is costly, difficult and for the most part unfamiliar work. The churches have barely begun to understand the pervasiveness, the inner aspects and interdependence of the economic, political and technological structures (powers) that hold creation in bondage. What we do know, however, is that we have been given the task of incarnating the manifold wisdom of God to the powers for the world's transformation (Eph. 3:10).

A COMMENT FROM A 'SECOND WORLD' PERSPECTIVE

46 While the societies in socialist countries ('second world') share many common ecological concerns and problems with societies in the industrially developed market economy societies, their situations have their own specificities. These need to be taken into account and given special attention within the framework of the JPIC process. The areas of difference are given below:

a The ideological orientation and re-orientation now going on through the process of "New Thinking" and perestroika seeks to renew the ideological roots of socialist societies in Marxist-Leninism. This process has its own special impact on people in socialist countries.

b The political structures of planning and the centralized control of the production process and of technological development raise different kinds of questions in the socialist context.

c The impact of market forces and of the world market on the industrial process in socialist countries raises different ecological issues.

d In the usual classification of North and South countries, socialist countries are included in the category of the "North". However, there are significant differences in the way socialist countries relate to the "South".

e The role and responsibility of Christian churches in these socialist countries are also understood differently; and they have their own specific problems.

PERSPECTIVES FROM PEOPLE OF OTHER FAITHS

47 As Christians we share the earth with persons of many different faiths, ideologies and cultures. We are part of a common human family. We recognise that many of the issues that concern us as Christians and as churches can be resolved only in partnership with persons of other faiths and convictions. The encounter with people of other faiths sharpens our awareness to other ways of understanding the relationship between humanity, nature and God. These can enrich our understanding and, at times, help us to reformulate our views. It is with this concern in mind that we listen to the significance of the integrity of creation from other faith perspectives.

48 We recognise the common scriptural and spiritual heritage we have with Jews and Muslims. We share with them our biblical vision of creation as belonging to God, who created and ordered it. All these three traditions speak of the intrinsic value of creation, of the special relationship in which the whole created order stands before God, and of the special place of human beings as persons appointed by God to care for God's creation.

49 While recognising the special place of human beings in creation, Judaism also emphasises the fact that the special place accorded to human beings in the creation does not permit abuse or inappropriate 'mastery' over the rest of creation. Jewish tradition has maintained time and again that Israel's vision of the non-human aspects of creation requires people to care for and serve other creatures (see, for example, Genesis 2:15). Care for the earth itself is reflected in the Sabbatical year and Jubilee laws. Scriptures even include laws for the protection of trees, preventing them from being cut when besieging enemy cities (Deuteronomy 20:19).

50 Jewish teaching firmly states that the whole of creation is God's. God is the primordial Creator, Sustainer, and is the One who renews creation. Indeed, certain texts from Jewish sacred writings (for example, the creation Psalms) can help other peoples of faith to understand the Jewish teaching on the creation, and can serve as a basis for dialogue with the Jewish community about biblical visions of creation.

51 Islam also affirms that the whole creation is the working of God. The central concept of Islam is *tawheed* or the unity of God. Allah is unity; and His unity is also reflected in the unity of humankind and the unity of

humanity and nature. Humankind's role on earth is that of a *khalifa*, vice regent or trustee of God, who is accountable to God for the trusteeship granted by God. A wanton, careless and wasteful use of creation is sin against the Creator. An irreverent attitude to the creation, even in the slaying of an animal for food, is to militate against God's holy will.

52 Significantly, Sikhism also emphasises the absolute dependence of creation on God. 'For countless ages', says Guru Nanak, 'there was utter misty darkness. There was neither day, nor night, no moon, no sun, but the Lord sat alone in a deep trance.....' (AG. 1035). Then God created the universe of which humankind is a part. Human beings stand along with the rest of creation before God and depend on God for their being.

53 In the Buddha's teaching, humanity functions in mutual interdependence with all creation. Human beings are intricately related to all sentient beings in a continuum of consciousness, but are special in that they are able to exercise will. Because of this, every human being, regardless of race, class, or sex has the potential for spiritual awakening and should be encouraged and supported towards that end. A skilful relation with creation is instrumental to spiritual awakening. Thus human beings should respect all creation and respond to it with 'humble harmlessness' (*ahimsa*) and compassion. There is no 'just' violence in Buddhism.

54 In relating to the earth it is important to obtain a 'right livelihood', a means of earning a living which is neither destructive nor causes suffering to self or others. Lawfully earned wealth should be used only as a means to provide supporting conditions for spiritual development for oneself and practising generosity to others, including animals.

55 Hinduism identifies God with the deepest level of existence in all things, the self or *atman*. Since God is one and invisible, he/she constitutes the fundamental principle of unity which runs through all creation. If we are united at the deepest levels of ourselves with God, we will have a profound and challenging justification for *ahimsa* or non-violence as a way of living. All beings should be treated as oneself because we do share a single self in God. We need to be reconciled with creation through a vision of the unity of all that exists in God. It involves in the words of the Bhagavadgita "the perception of God in all things and all things in God (6:30). This outlook provides the basis for a celebrative love of creation, a reverence for life in all its forms, and an unselfish way of sharing its blessings.

56 The Hindu affirmation of the fundamental unity of all existence has as its corollary the truth of life's interdependence. If a vision of life

prompts a sense of compassion for all that exists, our appreciation of life's interdependence reminds us of our obligations to the rest of creation. We are indebted to non-human life forms and the inanimate world. These must also be the objects or our compassion, the recipients of our love and beneficiaries of our service. The Hindu principle of mutual obligation is based on individual life as an integral and interrelated part of all life. The uniqueness of the human being lies only in our ability to discover and celebrate life's unity in God through all that we do.

57 As Christians and churches we share a common concern for the creation with our neighbours of other faiths. To dialogue with them is to rediscover and lift up those traditions within each of our faith perspectives that affirm the intrinsic value of creation and the intimate interdependence of life. We then discover areas where there is much scope for mutual enrichment and correction, as well as areas for collaboration and cooperation on many contemporary issues related to creation. The 'Integrity of Creation' is a subject on which there is much scope for dialogue and mutual learning among the religious traditions of humankind.

BIBLICAL-THEOLOGICAL VISION ON THE INTEGRITY OF CREATION

The experiences, struggles and theology expressed above make certain things clear.

58 First, these viewpoints are windows into understanding the integrity of creation. Certainly there are many more. Christians in different settings throughout the world will bring a variety of experiences and insights to deepen the understanding of this challenge.

59 Second, in each of these perspectives, the links of the integrity of creation with justice and peace are clearly evident. This underscores biblical and theological truth. Thus, we find an intersection of two approaches to the churches' commitment to the integrity of creation. Theological affirmation, from biblical resources, joins the theology of Christians who discover from their particular experiences that the integrity of creation, justice and peace are three aspects of one reality - God's intention for the world.

60 Third, the perspectives of Christians engaged in the struggle for creation's integrity challenge the Church to deepen its theological and biblical understanding at this point. Our task here is to engage our rich theological traditions with the contemporary and profound crisis threatening creation's integrity. A solid foundation in the biblical and theological understanding of the integrity of creation will help enable

the churches to speak, act and respond with power.

BIBLICAL THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON CREATION

61 Our world is broken. The creation groans. We ourselves groan with it. We recognize the pervasive power of sin, both in us as persons, and in the structures which shape our existence. But the Risen Christ is victor over sin and death. And sin shall not triumph.

62 In our task ahead, we Christians need some clear biblical-theological perspectives for our orientation. We are not the first to embark on this theological task, and should be aware of possible mistakes in approach and attitude. We list some of these:

a **Reductionism in theology** - reducing the Gospel to a personal salvation, with emphasis on the eternal destiny of the human soul, ignoring God's work in the world; and sometimes suggesting that if persons are converted, all problems would resolve themselves.

b **Scientific-technological *hubris***, persuading us that the ecological crisis is a technical problem to be solved purely by technical methods; ignoring its wider ramifications in justice and peace, in the sinful structures of human existence and in human greed and mindless industrial development

c **Romantic response** reflected in the 'back to nature' approach, nostalgic for a return to a pre-technological way of life, ignoring the God-given dynamism of science/technology as a force to be brought under human control rather than to be escaped from

d **A neo-apocalyptic approach** which sees the ecological crisis as harbinger of the end of the world, rather than as a judgement of God calling us to repentance and the mending of our ways

e **The utopian response** which seeks unrealistic, naive and fanciful pictures of a perfect and problemless world in history; failing to recognise the structures of sin which will continue to menace us even without the ecological crisis

f **The fatalist response** which is a combination of indifference and despair, and says: 'after all, we can't do anything about it'.

g **The 'other people's problem' response** which can be seen in parts of the world where people take the ecocrisis to be a problem of advanced industrial societies and see a false alternative or priority between the demands of justice and the need to sustain the biosphere.

OUR THEOLOGICAL HERITAGE

Creation as God's Gift

63 Creation came into being by the will and love of the Triune God, and as such it possesses an inner cohesion and goodness. Though human eyes may not always discern it, every creature and the whole creation in chorus bear witness to the glorious unity and harmony with which the creation is endowed. And when our human eyes are opened and our tongues unloosed, we too learn how to praise and participate in the life, love, power and freedom that is God's continuing gift and grace.

64 God is the 'Creator of all things' (I Cor. 8:6; Rom. 11:36). Christ is the one 'through whom all things were made' (John 1:3) I Cor. 8:6; Heb. 1:2). The Holy Spirit is 'the Lord, the Giver of Life' (The Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed). If we speak of creation's 'integrity', this must be our point of departure. We ourselves are not the ones who 'integrate' creation; its integration is prior to our concern, prior to our participation. The integrity of creation is the work of the One who creates, redeems and sanctifies it. It is precisely that work that we have in mind when we speak of 'the integrity of creation' and our role in it.

'Creation out of Nothing'

65 A long tradition of the faith affirms that the world was created 'out of nothing' (*ex nihilo*), and not out of pre-existent matter. This doctrine prevents us from confusing God with the created reality. It finds expression, for instance, in the Second Book of Maccabees, "Beholding the heavens and the earth, and seeing all that is there, you will understand that God has created it all from nothing" (7:28).

66 We find that this doctrine also contains for us today an important nuance of meaning. For it implies that creation is not be taken for granted. It is always in danger of regressing into oblivion and chaos. Human greed, exploitation and gross irresponsibility have unleashed forces of disintegration which threaten the very life of the world. Today, evidence of these forces are plainly visible.

The Reintegration of Creation

67 In and through the incarnation of the divine word, humanity and the whole creation are enabled to taste 'new life'. The old realities are still with us, and our consciousness of their negating and alienating power keeps us from presumption and the loss of vigilance, but they do not cause us to despair. For, through the sacrificial death and liberating victory of Christ, God has inaugurated the reintegration of this broken world. In his own person, Jesus Christ exemplifies the glorious destiny of a transfigured creation.

The Intrinsic Worth of all Living Beings

68 The creation is good **intrinsically**. It is not only our human valuation (which is all too tenuous) that renders creation 'good'. Creation is good in and of itself as God's own intention and work.

69 This applies to all the beings, animate and inanimate, made by God and not only or even especially to humanity. The world of sea and forest, desert and fertile field, with its myriad creatures becomes, after all, the very context of the incarnation of the word.

70 In the reign that has been initiated by God's reintegrative work in Jesus Christ, and is continued through the sanctifying presence of the divine Spirit, all creatures have their rightful place. They may live in harmony one with another, a 'peaceable Kingdom'. This, we recognize, is a matter of 'faith, not sight'; yet it is the eschatological reality to which our faith points us, as it is also the basis of our sacramental life and the substance of our hope for a transformed natural and social order.

The Biblical Vision

71 In the Bible, the whole of creation renders praise and gratitude to the Creator. Unlike anthropocentric views which ascribe value to the environment only because of its satisfying human need, biblical perspectives underscore creation's goodness because it is the work of God. For this reason, all parts of the creation are described as giving God praise and glory with joy.

72 In Psalm 148, for instance, the sun, moon and stars, fire and hail, snow and frost, mountains, fruit trees, cedars, beasts, and cattle are invited to praise God from the heavens and the earth. Many Psalms echo this truth. In Psalm 96:1, all the earth -sings to the Lord+. And later we read, -let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; let the sea roar, and all that fills it; let the field exult, and everything in it.+ Then shall the trees of the wood sing for joy before the Lord ...'(v. 11-12) (see also Psalm 97:1,6; Psalm 19:1, etc).

73 The Book of Job contains one of the Bible's most powerful descriptions of God's intimate action in bringing forth and sustaining all the dimensions of creation's life. Found in chapters 38 through 42:6, God's answer to Job comes as a series of questions poetically stressing God's presence in all the creation. "Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell me, if you have understanding... Have you commanded the morning since your days began, and caused the dawn to know its place ... Have you comprehended the expanse of the earth? Declare, if you know all this ... From whose womb did the ice come forth, and who has given birth to the hoar frost of heaven ..." (Job 38: 4,12,18,29).

Job responds "Behold, I am of small account; what shall I answer thee? I lay my hand on my mouth" (40:4). Contrary to some presumed attitudes of humanity's dominant role over the earth, this vision compels a stance of humble awe and wonder. In this picture, the majesty of the creation disarms human arrogance and self-sufficiency.

74 Continually, biblical passages point to the on-going activity of God in sustaining and upholding each dimension of the creation. The rich descriptions in Psalm 104, for example, portray the interdependence of the created order, which lives by the breath or Spirit of God (v. 29). In this Psalm, the Spirit of God is the source of life of all creatures, and not only humans.

75 In the wisdom literature of the Bible, the Creation itself speaks as the Wisdom of God:

> Listen. Wisdom is calling out. Reason is making herself heard...
> The Lord created me at the beginning of his work the first of his acts of old.
> Ages ago I was set up at the first, before the earth began,
> Before he made the earth with its fields or the first of the dust of the world,
> when he established the heavens,
> I was there...
> I was beside him, like a master workman
> I was daily his delight
> rejoicing before him always
> rejoicing in his inhabited world and delighting in the children of humanity.
>
> Proverbs 8:1, 22-32 RSV
> (see also Prov. 3:19-20)

76 In the Bible, wisdom (*hochmah* in Hebrew, *sophia* in Greek) is female, representing reason and delight, a source of rejoicing to God and to all humanity. The Genesis passages on creation should be read in conjunction with these other passages, including the visions of Isaiah (ch 11; 45:18ff; 65:17ff).

77 The opening chapters of Genesis have served as primary resources for the reflection of the church regarding the role of humanity, creation and God. In particular, attention has focused on Genesis 1: 26-28, and the second and third chapters of Genesis. This biblical focus often used exclusively by some church traditions, has prevented the church from discovering the full biblical vision regarding the integrity of creation.

78 In Genesis 1:26-28, we find a vision of humanity's role of 'dominion' within the created order. Such dominion, however, refers specifically to the task of upholding God's purposes in the creation, rather than imposing humanity's self-serving ends. In Gen. 2:15 we also find the legitimate interpretation of "dominion" humanity is "to serve and keep the earth".

79 Further, creation of humanity 'in the image of God' finds its expression in Christ, whose self-giving love reconciles all that exists.

80 Central to these biblical insights is the conviction that the world and all creation belong to God. Contrary to modern assumptions which vest ownership of the earth in human hands, the Bible declares that - whatever is under the whole heaven is mine- (Job 41:11). (See also Psalm 24:1; 50:12; Exodus 19:5; Deuteronomy 10:14). These truths became the basis for such Old Testament traditions as the Sabbath and the laws for the Jubilee Year.

81 "The land shall not be sold in perpetuity, for the land is mine," reads Leviticus 25:33. The Jubilee passages, giving instructions for the redistribution of land and wealth, rest on the belief that creation is not a possession to be seized by humanity, but a gift belonging to God.

82 While setting forth these pictures of creation's integrity, the biblical vision also underscores the break in relationship within humanity and between humanity and the rest of creation resulting from sin. The passages in the beginning of Genesis describing humanity's disobedience to God display the resulting alienation from the earth. Adam and Eve are expelled from the Garden which they were commanded to "Serve and keep" (Genesis 2:15). Moreover, Cain's murder of Abel causes his "blood to cry out from the ground." (4::10). Cain becomes a fugitive severed from a fruitful relationship to the earth.

83 The obvious ecological consequences of sin are echoed throughout the Old Testament. "The earth lies polluted under its inhabitants for they have transgressed the laws, violated the statutes..." (Isaiah 24:5). Hosea laments the mourning of the earth, and the languishing of the beasts, birds, and fish because of humanity's unfaithfulness and sin (Hosea 4:3; for similar examples see Isaiah 5:8-10; Jeremiah 12:4).

84 In the New Testament there is a vision of the Reign of God as the fulfilment of God's intention for the creation. Although at the present time it is hidden in suffering, it is also manifest in the experiences of healing and wholeness in which both woman and men participate. The healing stories in the Gospels are to be seen as the healing of creation marred by human sin. Eyes are opened; lepers are cleansed; paralysis is

healed; out of the mud of the earth, new eyes are created (John 9:6) emphasizing the creative dependency between human beings and the earth (*adam* and *adama*) as in the old creation stories. Creation is healed and restored when marginalized women and men form the new community in Christ.

85 This salvation brought about by Jesus is thus manifest in the physical and spiritual experience of a renewed life. The women in the healing stories often suffer from physical afflictions, and are considered by the society of that time as impure. They also are marginalized and treated as outcasts (Mark 5:22-43; Luke 13: 10-17). However, Jesus makes them full persons, who are healed and empowered to participate. In some of the stories, their wholeness is given in the promise of shalom: "go in peace". It is a transition from non-belonging to belonging, from alienating impurity to integration, from brokenness to wholeness, from oppression to freedom.

86 The Reign of God as the fulfilment of God's intention for the creation is made concrete in the healing actions of Jesus. Jesus commissions his disciples to proclaim the reality of God's reign and to be engaged in its healing and reconciling reality. In regard to the resurrection of Jesus and the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, the reality of the Kingdom is made known in the gathering together of the new community which is inclusive of all peoples. Thus the Reign of God gives birth to the *ekklesia.*

87 In his letter to the Galatians, Paul reminds them of their baptismal experience and obligation. In baptism they are all renewed into oneness in Christ, into an alternative community, with the potential to overcome the divisions and discriminations, often leading to oppression, that are otherwise imposed on them. "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female" (Gal. 3:26-28). Paul speaks of this reconciliation as a new creation: "therefore, if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation..." (2 Cor. 5:16f).

88 In Romans 8:18-28, the setting free of the creation is linked with the resurrection of human bodies and the manifestation of the children of God. 1 Corinthians 15:20-25 and 51-57; Ephesians 1;9-10, 15-23; 2 Peter 3:5-13; and many other New Testament passages, show the intimate connection between the salvation of human beings and the renewal, reconstitution and re-ordering of the whole universe.

89 Of course, this does not mean that the human and the extra-human aspects of creation are of the same level of worth or value in the eyes of God. What matters in the continuity and integrity between the two, not

their comparative worth. There are occasions when humanity has to choose between the conflicting interests of a human person and that of a tree or an animal. There is thus both continuity and tension; and there are no *a priori* categories which fit every occasion.

90 The tension of continuity and surprise is present in the stories where the risen Christ appears to his disciples. His 'bodily' appearance is emphasised, so that he can be recognized (Luke 24: 36-43; John 20: 19-29). The couple at Emmaus know him in the breaking of the bread. But the moment they recognize him, he vanishes; and they are left with the concrete element of the broken bread - probably an allusion to the eucharist (Luke 24:13-35; cf. John 21: 9-14). By the Holy Spirit, the material elements, bread and wine, reveal in the eucharist Jesus' continuous presence among them.

91 Thus the separation of transcendence and immanence is a denial not only of the incarnation of Christ but also of the resurrection. The divine presence of the risen Christ is still to be received in material things - in 'fruits of the earth and human labour'.

92 As we elevate the bread and wine, we proclaim again the presence of Christ in and for the world. We reaffirm the divine presence with the material world of human existence. We are reminded of our utter dependence upon the just sharing of human labour, food, drink and the material substance of the world. We, therefore, proclaim our unity as human beings in our common need for each other and for the integration of creation. As we break the bread together, we celebrate the sanctification of the material world of which the bread and we ourselves are part; the world of soil, water and air, of forests, mountains and lakes; a world continually bearing new life, nourishing, nurturing, rejoicing, aging, suffering, grieving, dying and revealing God.

93 Although Jesus Christ constitutes the focal point of the biblical doctrine of the creation, the Trinitarian context is fundamental. The creation in its original and continuous phases, including its restoration and renewal, is the result of one act of the Holy Trinity which, as the Creed so eloquently summarizes, proceeds from the Father, is actualized through the Son and completed in the Holy Spirit. This Trinitarian perspective is often concealed in the Christological focus of the Bible, as, for instance, in such pivotal statements of the New Testament as the opening verses of John's Gospel or the Pauline affirmation that all things are through him and for him.

THE INTEGRITY OF CREATION

Background and Intentions

94 The term 'integrity of creation' is new for the Christian churches. It emerged in the Vancouver Assembly deliberations of the World Council of Churches. Several meetings have begun to explore the meaning of the term. The present work is a continuation of this process. The term is not without its difficulties, particularly when it is translated into some other languages. Yet, it is evocative of many meanings and, potentially, an appropriate expression of the Gospel for our age.

95 This document does not aim to give final definitions. Rather, the term is viewed as one which encourages the churches to reflect imaginatively on the whole doctrine of creation and its meaning for our particular moment in history. With this in view, the document presents here several aspects of the term.

Dependence upon the Creator

96 First and foremost, the integrity of creation causes us to reaffirm the truth that all that exists, visible and invisible, has God for its author. This not only implies the entire dependence of the creation upon its Creator, but also connotes something about the worth and dignity of the creation itself, whose life is thus sustained and held dear.

The Interrelatedness of All that Is

97 The integrity of creation implies that every creature is bound to every other creature in a great community and communion of being. It is particularly important for human beings to learn this truth, for we have thought ourselves apart, above, separate. But we are part of the totality, sharing with all other living beings their creaturehood, with its limitations and its possibilities. Nor are we strangers to the material world; we too are 'flesh' (Is. 40:11), we too receive our life, daily, at the hands of our Maker (Ps. 104: 29-30).

Wholeness

98 The term integrity of creation suggests a perspective of wholeness. It militates against narrowness and parochialism. It impels us to search for meaning in our total environment, not only in our local communities, our nations, our regions and continents, but globally - indeed, universally. The term presses towards an inclusiveness that human beings have, perhaps, only just begun to explore.

The Stewardship of Creation

99 In this term, we hear that the human species is called to employ its wisdom and creative skills in all fields of endeavour - industry, economics,

politics, science, art - under the impulse of a strong sense of stewardship. According to the Scriptures, stewardship, far from being a merely utilitarian and managerial metaphor, assumes as its basis a solidarity with all for which the steward is responsible and answerable, and it issues in a life of service and sacrifice. In all that we do and are, we are to offer ourselves sacramentally to God, to one another, and to the world God loves.

Commitment

100 While it has special application to the natural world, the term integrity of creation reminds us of human society as well, which is part of nature in the broadest sense. It reminds us, too, of social evils such as racism, sexism, unfair land distribution, political oppression by dominant groups, and other manifestations of the human sin of separation and pride. Militarism and the prospect of nuclear conflagration simply do not accord with a vision of an integrated creation. As we respond to the groans of creation, we shall find ourselves drawn into a struggle, together with that Spirit which wrestles with our human spirits, for the liberation and transfiguration of the creation in all of its parts. The voiceless, human and others, should find their voice and be heard, the marginalized a place, and endangered species a champion. Our commitment to 'the integrity of creation' is a commitment to life in the midst of this world's kingdoms of death.

Hope

101 The integrity of creation is also an expression of Christian hope. This hope is undertaken in the midst of a world that is fragmented, distorted and threatened by many foes of life, visible and invisible. The creation is still in the grasp of sin, still prone to 'nothingness'. In the pollution of the biosphere, rampant deforestation and desertification, the stockpiling of nuclear wastes, the erosion of arable lands, and many other phenomena, we see more than enough evidence of the vulnerability of the world and of human civilization. But the Gospel enables us to hope. These tokens of disintegration are not inevitable. Change, while neither automatic nor assured, is possible. And changes are happening. There are so many movements, Christian and other, which bear witness to God's continuing activity and are real signs of hope.

Solidarity and Fulfilment

102 Finally, the integrity of creation speaks to us as members of 'the body of Christ'. Through the One who loved 'the world' (John 3:16), we are enabled to love and to embrace with compassion the whole creation. We are beginning to know the meaning of this love. Like the love of God by which it is enabled, love also involves suffering for 'the other' - and 'the other' understood, now, as inclusive of other species, not only of our

own kind. In this solidarity with the whole, in the love of Christ, we shall find our own human fulfilment as well.

THE ROLE OF THE CHURCHES

Repentance

103 The Churches can fulfil their vocation with solidarity and compassion only when they begin with repentance. As Christians, we confess that we have failed to realise the breadth of our vocation and have yielded to restrictive visions of our calling. The egocentrism and ethnocentrism of our pursuits have been exposed in our time as, perhaps, never before. By our neglect, if not also in positive ways, we have contributed to the emergence of a consumerist and anthropomorphic world view which denigrates both matter and the extra human species. Without knowing it (yet never in total innocence), we have even employed the Bible and our various traditions of doctrine to support prevailing patterns within triumphalistic and imperialistic societies. If we are to fulfil our prophetic calling, we churches shall have to become more critical of our past than we have tended to be, and alter in sometimes drastic ways our present programmes and lifestyles.

The Common Search

104 When we are faithful to our calling, the Church's testimony to creation is one of gratitude for being, and for the promise of the fullness of being. We are enabled, through faith, to see creation moving towards transfiguration and fulfilment, reflecting the eternal mystery of the Triune God. This is not our own wisdom or insight, it too is a gift. The First Article of the Creeds can only be confessed truly and proclaimed faithfully in the light of the Second and Third articles.

105 It is, however, essential for the churches today to realize, as they have not always done heretofore, the reality and significance of that preliminary but persistent groping after transcendence that is proper to humankind as such, and never absent from the human spirit (Acts 17). Being created in God's image and likeness, the human being, irrespective of credal commitments, carries within itself a sense of dependency, a quest for wholeness, and a feeling for the inviolable sacredness of life. Humanity can be addressed. It is never quite cut off from its source and Ground. Thus, in order to achieve a truly integral vision of creation, it is vital that the churches involve themselves in a diaconic service, in whose performance they are prepared to work with all who are concerned for life, for its enhancement.

The Liturgy of Creation

106 The true vocation of the human person is to be the priest of

creation - to stand before the Creator on behalf of all creation (intercession), and in turn to interpret the good intention of the Creator to and for all.

107 For the churches, it is important not only to promote this calling in a general way, but to give it specific form and visibility in worship and in worldly service. In doing this, the Church will realise its own vocation as a community of healing.

108 Authentic liturgy is doxological, recapitulating the destiny of all creation in the praise of the Creator. Likewise it is sacramental, lifting up the unity of creation, incarnation, sacrament and service: "The Word became flesh." The Vancouver Assembly of the World Council of Churches (1983) spoke of this as the 'eucharistic vision'. We are to remember, however, that such expressions ought not to be reduced to mere ecclesiastical institutions and their practices. The eucharistic vision can be enjoyed only by communities of faith which learn how to bear the cross, to suffer with a 'groaning creation'. It is the very life of the world, in all of its mystery and promise, that lies at the heart of our mission today.

CONCLUSION

109 The integrity of creation provides an effective way to open up new perspectives for seeing issues of justice and peace. This is not to say that the demand for justice and the need to save our world from a nuclear holocaust can wait till the ecological issues are resolved. An adequate understanding of the integrity of creation provides a more effective way of dealing with all the crises of humanity, all the global issues of injustice and war, waste and exploitation, nuclear testing and the oppression of women, and a host of other problems which confront humanity.

110 The JPIC process is meant to be one in which all the churches and Christians join hands with each other and with all people of goodwill on a resolute advance to work with God in order to make the Integrity of Creation, with Justice and Peace, more of a reality. God is at work. In God is our trust and hope.

The Eastern and Oriental Orthodox contribution to the JPIC second draft document

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The representatives and the participants of the Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Churches, participating in the JPIC Convocation on Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation, Seoul, Korea, March 5 - 13, 1990, have agreed to make the following contribution, which concerns the ideas of "covenant", "covenanting" and "renewing our covenant with God" which are presented in the draft document as one of the main themes for the Convocation.

1 The evaluation of the 2nd Draft text of the JPIC is, without doubt, a major obligation of the representatives of the various local Orthodox Churches. This obligation flows not only from self-understanding and consciousness, but from the expressed will of the WCC to encourage and promote, as much as possible, a more representative contribution of all of the member Churches toward the formulation of a commonly acceptable or at least shared theological foundation of its documents. Motivated by this spirit, there is an official need for some form of "synodical or conciliar process," which could especially be applied to this specific document of the JPIC. This observation of the Orthodox representatives is based on their absolute agreement both with the analyses of the contemporary tragic reality which we face and with the need for the immediate mobilization of the Churches and their faithful members in order to forestall the fearsome consequences which even threaten the continuation of life on our planet.

Nevertheless, and in spite of this extensive agreement with the clear descriptive analysis of the problem and the discussion of the moral requirements for its resolution, serious reservations regarding the

representative fullness of the theological presuppositions of the text were expressed by all of the Orthodox representatives in the work groups and are recorded in summary form in the present document with the intent that they be taken under serious consideration by the appropriate drafting committee for inclusion in the final draft of the text.

2 Of course, these observations refer primarily to the theological structure of the text: but they would not have been necessary, at least in major dimensions,

a) if the texts prepared at the Orthodox theological consultations sponsored by the WCC at Sophia in 1987 and Minsk in 1989, had been taken into consideration and more fully used in the preparation of the Convocation text by the JPIC drafters. The proposals of these Orthodox meetings, even though they reported the Orthodox theological presuppositions to the JPIC, these topics were completely ignored or at least were not included in the text by the drafters of the document, and

b) if use had been made of the spirit and the theological presuppositions of the Pan-Orthodox statement which was unanimously accepted by the representatives of all of the Autocephalous and Autonomous Orthodox Churches at the Third Pre-Conciliar Pan-Orthodox Conference mentioned above. This proclamation of the Third Pre-Synodical Pan-Orthodox Conference concerning the "Contribution of the Orthodox Church Toward the Establishment of Peace, Justice, Freedom, Brotherhood, and Love Among Peoples and for the Elimination of Racial and Other Prejudices", is the official position of the Orthodox Church on the topic of JPIC, and it could have contributed positively to the expansion of the theological base of the document under discussion.

3 The foundational theological base of the text under discussion, as announced by its authors and is, in reality, the idea of the "covenanting God" and the covenant, which underlays consistently the whole organization and structure of the text: "The informing metaphor throughout the document is that of covenant. This is, of course, more than a mere metaphor for Christians... Through it, however, we wish to focus our thought so that this might be a work of true theological *praxis*... To reflect on such a theme, rightly, is to renew our covenant with the One to whom the world 'belongs'... In renewing our covenant with God, we also join hands with the many concerned scientists..." (para. 7, 110ff.)

There is no question, then, that the choice of this theological basis by the drafters has taken place on the basis of the subjective criteria of a particular theological mentality which however is not that of the official basis of the member churches of the WCC, or at least that which is embodied in the

various programs of the "Faith and Order" Committees that is, "Baptism - Eucharist - Ministry", "The Unity of the Church and the Renewal of Human Community" and "Towards a Common Expression of the Apostolic Faith Today".

This subjective choice of the document's theological basis by the drafters explains the clear theological one-sidedness of the text, which could be characterized as a successful analysis of the Old Testament teaching regarding covenant and the covenanting God, but it is not adequate to express the broad theological vision of the developing programme of "Faith and Order", and even more so, the theological and ecclesiological presuppositions of the Orthodox Church.

The idea of covenant is based on the acceptance of a particular meaning of "ownership" by God of the world (para. 80) which however, "differs... radically from the usual perceptions of possession and power". (para. 81). This is understood as God's pathos of love toward the whole creation, the incarnation of Jesus Christ (para. 82). But it is proclaimed most clearly on the basis of Old Testament criteria, as is seen from the biblical references from which it is noted, that "for the biblical faith none is more significant than the belief that God is a covenanting God" (para 84), that "at the heart of the Covenant is the promise and challenge," "I will be your God and you should be my people" (para. 85), and that "God elects human beings as God's covenant partners" (para. 86. See also para. 113, 119, 120, etc.)

This one sided focus, however, leads to the clear relativization of the significance of the content of the new covenant in Christ, which is interpreted by the Old Covenant perspectives concerning covenant and leads to a marginalizing of the value of the whole redemptive work of Christ. Thus, the incarnation of the Son and Word of God is presented as a simple expression "of God's *pathos* of love" for the world (para. 104) and the New Testament itself as a simple successive stage and natural continuation of the Covenants of the "covenanting God with Noah and Abraham". Within this context "God's covenant with Israel was focused finally in the New Covenant in Jesus Christ, crucified and risen."

The only difference which is presented refers to the fact that in Christ "the covenant is made open to all" (para. 88.89). The objective content, consequently of the whole redemptive work of Jesus Christ is interpreted within this framework, since only through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the world and by means of this outpouring upon Jesus Christ at His baptism, the Kingdom of God, i.e. *shalom*, is established in Christ and through Christ is it made "real in history" (para. 91). This was revealed through the whole teaching ministry of Christ, for "through Christ's

parables and the miracles of healing, the Kingdom of God becomes manifest as a dynamic, growing reality, transforming political, social, economic and ecological relationships" (para. 92, 102)

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4 This exclusive theological foundation of the draft document serves to indicate its weak points, because the one-sided projection of the idea of Covenant and the covenanting God:

a) weakens the relation and the reference of the Covenants of God to the whole plan of the divine economy between the Old Testament promise and the fulfilment of the promise of the redemption of humanity and the world. A consequence of this weakening of the whole plan of salvation was not only the depriving of the concept of covenant of its objective redemptive content, but the weakening of the trinitarian character of the whole divine plan of salvation which is realized always by the Father, through the Son and in the Holy Spirit;

b) it introduces both explicitly and covertly a division between the New Covenant of God and the redemptive work of Christ, between Christ and the Church, between the Church and the Kingdom of God, etc., which represent certain partial theological trends within the wider ecumenical movement, but which further, are not necessary for JPIC document.

5 Further, based on these documents, we believe that God's covenant with humanity, that was established in the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Redeemer (Luke 22:20: Matt. 26:28: Mark. 14:23: 1 Cor. 11:25), is unbreakable and eternal. Therefore, we reject any possibility for human beings to break, and then to renew or re-establish the Covenant with God. Thus:

a) We acknowledge that the people of God may be faithful to God's Covenant, or unfaithful and sinful against it. If we are sinful and unfaithful, we need sincere repentance, and conversion of our hearts to God. But repentance never means renewal of the Covenant which can be neither broken, nor renewed by us;

b) that is why we can accept the notion of "covenanting" only in a sense of "pronouncing mutual commitments", without applying to it any special theological and ecclesiological meaning. We cannot agree with the concept of "renewing our covenant with God" as proposed by the 2nd Draft Document of the Convocation (paras. 131-137) and explained by Dr. Niles in his speech "Covenanting for justice, peace and the integrity of creation" (Doc. par. 1.4).

Our refusal to accept this theological idea of "covenanting" and "renewing

our covenant with God" does not mean that by doing this, we deny the positive content of the Convocation as a whole. In all those who have gathered for this Convocation we see our brothers and sisters in Christ. We express our solidarity with the oppressed and the poor, with those who struggle for justice, peace, and the integrity of creation in their societies. We are ready to commit ourselves to justice, peace and the integrity of creation. We are eager to bring our own concerns into the JPIC process, and make our contributions to it.

c) However, we would like to participate in this process in a way agreeable to our convictions and acceptable for our believers. It is our great hope that the JPIC process will develop further in a way acceptable to the various church traditions represented in the ecumenical community.

The positive and successful ecumenical experience which we have had persuades us that there exists a practical and real possibility of joint ecumenical gathering, prayer and action, marked both by mutual respect for differing theological systems and traditions, as well as by true Christian commitment to JPIC. We hope and pray that the spirit of mutual respect and brotherly love prevail in our joint work for justice, peace and the integrity of creation.

It is our hope that these views will be used to significantly modify the text in regard to its treatment of the "covenant idea" contained in it. Failing that, we feel strongly that the present statement should be published together with the documents of the Convocation.

Justice, peace and the integrity of creation

A Catholic Contribution to the Process of Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation

CALLED BY THE GOD OF THE COVENANT

1 The Triune God, the Father of mercy, in his benevolent plan (cf. Eph 1:9) incessantly calls all men and women to enter into a covenant with him. Such is the Good News fully accomplished in Jesus Christ, who sends from the Father the One who is the first gift made to the faithful, the Life-giving Spirit.

Through faith, the Church, which is a sacrament of the intimate union of humankind with God and of the unity of all humankind, knows that its peace is rooted in the mystery of the divine Trinity (cf. Eph 6:15). For it is God who primarily gathers together, and all ecclesiastical gathering finds its legitimacy and meaning in this first call, to which it is our dignity to answer in obedience to faith. From there flows for the Church the duty to proclaim, in the name of the Gospel, peace and justice, to be its witness, and to remind all of the meaning of our stewardship (*diakonia*) over creation. To assume this task is indeed part of the specific mission of the Church which is evangelization.

The Catholic Church reaffirms here its awareness of the possibility of accomplishing this mission only in the common witnessing with all Christian sisters and brothers. "The collaboration of all Christians vividly puts the image of the serving Christ in clearer evidence...Through this collaboration, all who believe in Christ can easily learn how to better know one another, have more esteem for another and prepare the way to the unity of Christians (UR 12). The Catholic Church feels herself bound by this invitation of the Second Vatican Council to collaborate with the other churches and Christian Communities wherever it is henceforth possible. This resolve has been often reaffirmed (cf. UR 12; GS 92 and 3; SRS * 32) and we reaffirm it in the anticipation of the World Convocation on Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation.

*** Encyclical Letter Sollicitudo Rei Socialis (1987)**

2 We believe that God created all things with wisdom and love. He has made man and women in his own image and likeness and has entrusted the world to them, so that by serving their creator, as faithful stewards, they may reign over creation.

Thus, in entrusting this stewardship to man and woman, God has, in a certain way, established with them a first covenant. In recalling it, the Church reminds humankind of its true identity and of its vocation on earth.

3 Through sin humankind has turned away from God and his love, (Gen 3:6-7). Wars, violence of all kinds, hatreds and discriminations, the accumulation of injustices, the spreading of selfishness and greed, breakdown and destruction of nature are consequences of sin. The latter - the sin of persons or structures of sin that flow from it - is a rupture of the covenant. When humankind disfigures the image of God, sin is always a bearer of death.

But God, rich in mercy (Eph 1::14) has not abandoned us to the power of death. He has unceasingly multiplied the covenants with us, manifesting each time with a new depth the immensity of his love. As upon unshakeable rock, so is our hope of salvation founded on the manifestation of his love.

4 God so loved the world that he sent his only Son (cf. John 3,:16), Jesus Christ, Our Saviour, in whom is accomplished the fullness of salvation and through whom we receive eternal life. In him, the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last (cf. Rev 22:13; 21:6) we are a new creation. In him, we are already given all the power of salvation and the seeds of a renewed universe (Rev 21:5; Rom 8,:19). The Good News of salvation is announced to the poor, deliverance to the captives, joy to the afflicted (cf. Luke 4:16-19;Is 61: 1-3). From now on, our earth, torn apart by struggles and injustices but aspiring for peace and justice, is visited by the Beatitudes of the Kingdom.

5 Christ, the image of the invisible God, the First Born of all creatures (cf. Col 1:15), has lived our human condition and restored in us and for us the image of God disfigured by sin. In the Son of God made flesh, we can contemplate the perfect model of humanity corresponding to God's will.

Moreover, "the whole creation, until this time, has been groaning in labour pains" (cf. Rom 8:22) and we wait for "new heavens and a new earth where justice will dwell " (2 Peter, 3: 13) according to Christ's promise.

6 Christ, the redeemer of humankind, has accomplished God's plan by surrendering himself to death, thus manifesting the mystery of the divine agape and giving us the new commandment of a love that goes up to the laying down of one's life for those one loves (John 15:13). By his cross and resurrection, he has destroyed death and the powers of death, and has renewed life. He unceasingly sends from the Father the Spirit who is at work in the world and achieves all sanctification.

7 Thus, by faithfully responding to the call of faith, hope and charity, the Church and each one of us draw joyful strength to commit ourselves to the witnessing and effective service to others aspiring to peace, justice and glory of the Creator who is present and acting in his Creation. Our strength is rooted in the mystery of the Most Holy Trinity and in its plan of salvation revealed in Jesus Christ. This ministry is an essential duty for all Christians.

8 We do not enter here into questions pertaining to the theological significance of this great world event for which we hope with all our heart that it may contribute to a more determined common commitment of all Christians in favour of peace, justice and the stewardship of creation.

IN THE LIGHT OF GOD'S WORD

9 Clearly, God has entrusted to all of humanity a mission with regard to peace, justice and the visible creation.

This mission is only the explicitation of the commandment given at the beginning: "Let us make humankind in our own image, in the likeness of ourselves and let them be masters of the fish of the sea, the birds of heaven, the cattle, all the wild animals and all the creatures that creep along the ground" (Gen 1:26).

It does not mean using the visible creation and other people, man or woman, for one's own profit or to the advantage of a few, but to honour the resemblance of God the Creator which constitutes the identity itself of the human creature.

It is the harmony of the visible creation, the just relationship between individuals, individuals and society, society and society, and the full development of the created nature entrusted to men and women. "To dominate". here, does not mean "to oppress" nor "to enslave"; on the contrary it means to respect, maintain and strengthen the "good" (*tob*) placed by God the creator into creation, the "good" in which he rejoiced (cf. Gen 1:13).

That is what the first covenant of God with humanity is about. This is a

"Covenant of Peace" as the prophets proclaimed.

10 When the rupture of sin occurred whose immediate consequence was to destroy this original harmony and to place the human being in a contradictory and conflictual relationship with himself, with one another (first of all with his woman partner), and with all of creation (cf. 3 :18-19), peace disappeared. Justice was lacking because humans killed one another (cf. Gen. 4,:8) and nature rebelled against itself (cf. Gen 3, 17-19).

This disorder maintains and repeats itself indefinitely while getting worse through the course of history. What we see around us today is only a last manifestation that has become more dramatic perhaps because of the interdependence of the human species, with its added power of destruction and of the growing damage caused to nature.

11 But there is more to it than that. There is also, first and foremost, the wisdom and the benevolent will of God, his creative plan aiming for the "good" of his creatures as "in the beginning" (cf. Gen 1:1).

In this way, successive covenants tend to re-establish harmony, peace in justice, nevertheless counting on human responsibility as in the beginning. This is the meaning of the covenant with Noah (cf. Gen. 9:8. ff), of which the sign is made in nature (the rainbow; ibid. 12:16); the covenants made with Abraham, Moses, Aaron, David. When we speak of justice, respect of nature and the overcoming of conflicts, there is always human responsibility. But the effective and compassionate initiative is uniquely divine. Human actors are either descendants of Noah, or a family among nations, or a priestly lineage, or finally, a royal lineage which summarizes and synthesises them all.

It is the Messiah whose title is "Prince of Peace" (Isa iah 9:5). "Uprightness will be the belt around his waist" (ibid. 11:5) and nature will be reconciled by him and in him: "No hurt, no harm will be done on all my holy mountain" (ibid.V.9).

12 We recognise under these traits of the Messiah, Jesus the Christ, Our Lord, Son of God and Son of Man.

It is in him that the definitive covenant is fulfilled, "in his blood" (cf. Luke 22:20); or rather, he is himself the "covenant" (cf. Isaiah 42:6). Through the same reasoning, it is in him that the harmony of creation is re- established within itself and with God. He brings peace like a gift unique to himself, incomparable to any other peace (cf. John 14:27). He grants the justice which "surpasses that of the scribes" (cf. Matt 5:20) and

therefore all other justice. He reconciles with his Father "all things...everything in heaven and everything on earth" (cf. Col 1:20).

But in addition to this, he is peace, "our peace" (Eph 2:14); he became "for us....justice" ; in him is realised the "new creation" (cf. Gal 6::15) That is to say there is no true peace, full justice, nor a truly reconciled creation except in him.

Before human responsibility, there is above all divine initiative, realized forever in Jesus Christ. This means that peace, justice and reconciliation already exist, and are once again entrusted to humankind, so that they be put into practice in daily living. These gifts of peace, justice and reconciliation are entrusted to the group of disciples who are recognised by their faith in Christ, according to the challenges of each time and place. There is no need to create this harmony from nothing; rather we must draw from the source and allow these waters to flow upon the world.

13 In this we see the vocation of the Church. God, in Jesus Christ, has entrusted it very precisely with "the Gospel of peace" (Eph 6:15). The Church proclaims and holds up, like Paul, "God's justice" "revealed" in the Gospel (Rom 1: 16-17). The Church has received "the ministry of reconciliation"

In its commitment to peace, justice and the integrity of creation, the Church is exercising its proper ministry of evangelization. She thus serves humankind and the God who has called her. The Church does this by following the Lord to the Cross, since it is by the Cross that peace has overcome violence, that justice has triumphed over evil and that the world has been finally reconciled.

Consequently, peace, justice and respect for nature must be those of Christ; they must be situated at the level of his mission and be brought about by means worthy of the divine blessings he has brought us.

14 Peace, in this meaning, is a gift of God in Christ through the Holy Spirit, as the New Testament often repeats. Peace is specifically a gift of the resurrected Christ (cf. John 20:19 - 21). We obtain it through prayer, we commit ourselves to it by serving our neighbour, near or far, in other words by love. Peace and love cannot be separated from one another; love inspires, sustains and pursues steps towards true peace. All that opposes love, destroys peace.

The same can be said for justice: it is above all given only by God to human Creature. It cannot, therefore, be limited to the establishment of strictly symmetrical relations (*do ut des*). Justice requires a new order and the

key is solidarity, in so far as it considers "the other" as "oneself" (SRS 38) and one's own good as the good of the other, according to the rule of the Acts of the Apostles (4:32). The goods of this world are, in fact, by their origin, destined for all. Thus, by serving justice, we rediscover the original intention of the creation and its harmony. For that purpose, we must overcome selfishness and the "structures of sin" created by it.

It is by love that we achieve this. The practice of justice presupposes love and ends in love.

15 The visible creation is, in its turn, submitted to sin (cf. Rom 8:20 ff), to "futility" and even "to the slavery of corruption" (ibid.). The devastations that victimise creation are caused by our sins. "Structures of sin" put all the weight of a refined technology on a nature that cannot bear it any more.

It is not an artificial order, that has to be imposed, favouring some to the detriment of others, but much more to rediscover the first meaning of creation, its "good" and its harmony of origin, thus helping in the "labour pains" that it suffers. We must look to the will of the Creator and to his commandments, to ethics and to the original meaning of the goods of this world.

It is not to "safeguard" an "integrity" or to salvage it, but to "use" a gift given to us, to utilise it for life and not for death, and in the last instance, for "the revelation of the sons of God", for the "glorious liberty of the children of God" (Rom 8,19ff). This presupposes the reign of peace, of justice and of love, in one word; the kingdom of God in Christ.

16 Such are truly the mission and the ministry or stewardship (*diakonia*) of all the Church and of all the Churches, in union with all men and all women of good will. This is the source and motivation of our practical commitments.

We shall only succeed if we finally realise that it is in obedience to God's plan for creation, and in the light of the goal he wished to give it, that we must work for peace, justice and the good of creation. It is God's plan in Christ, communicated through the Holy Spirit, that must finally determine our choices in these three areas which in reality, are but one.

It is the grave responsibility of Christians to proclaim "to all creatures" (cf. Mark 16:15) the very precise requirements of this plan; otherwise, there will be no peace, no justice, no world that we can inhabit with dignity.

COMMON COMMITMENT

17. As Christians of the whole world, representing the diversity of the Churches, convinced that we must advance towards that unity of the Church willed by its divine founder, we profess together, before our human brothers and sisters, our faith in God the Creator; Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We profess that in Adam, in Noah, and above all in Jesus Christ - Son of God and Son of Man - "the name which is above every name" (Phil.:2:9), the unique Saviour - God has made a covenant with all of humanity and with each of its members, even if they do not have knowledge of it. We profess that he offers to all a participation in the "communion" which unites the three divine persons. We profess that he calls them all - with a particular urgency, in these times of planetary interdependency and where humanity experiences at the same time possibilities of fulfilment and unparalleled threats - to work with all their strength for the promotion of peace, justice and of the responsible dominion over creation.

We who through grace are Christians and have the boldness to articulate with humility and joy this profession of faith, commit ourselves to bear witness to it together and to collaborate actively - by prayer, by repentance, by action - to this immense and thrilling endeavour, which is at the heart of the Church's mission of the evangelization of the world and of its ministry of unselfish service to humanity.

As we repent of all that is sin in our divisions, we commit ourselves to the deepening of the communion among ourselves; a Body of Christ, and of our common faith in the Triune God and in Jesus Christ, our God and Saviour.

We commit ourselves to become more and more united witnesses of the God who is love: the promoters of the "civilization of love" implied by all the dynamics of the Sermon on the Mount, the charter of the Kingdom.

We commit ourselves to come more and more united witnesses of the God who is love: the promoters of this "civilization of love" implied by all the dynamics of the Sermon on the Mount, the charter of the Kingdom.

We commit ourselves to become more and more united witnesses of the hope founded on the Word of God, and more particularly, on the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

We commit ourselves to work together for the elimination of the "structures of sin" that mark the life of contemporary humanity; the promotion of structures of justice and solidarity in all the collective dimensions of existence (political, economic, social relations, culture) at

the international level as much as the national, but also in our own Churches.

THE DYNAMICS OF PEACE

18 For the Christian, to desire peace is above all to know how to welcome it as a gift of Jesus Christ (cf. John 14:27) To promote it, is to proclaim that Jesus Christ is our peace (cf. Eph 2:14). It is therefore to deeply root the message of peace in the mystery of the Cross and in the hope of Resurrection. Jesus is the Crucified and the Risen one who has greeted his disciples with these words, "peace be with you"' then he showed them his hands and his side (John 20:21). The presence of the Risen One among us with marks of crucifixion assures us that, by him and in him, the world is wounded to be transformed (John Paul II, Speech at Assisi, 27th October, 1986). As a result there is a force of hope for the future: "If peace is possible in Christ and by Christ, it is possible among humans and by humans.". (Message on the occasion of the World Day for Peace, 1973).

If the dynamics of peace pass through the death and resurrection of Christ, they must also go through the stripping off of our "old self" and the putting on of the "new man" (Rom 6:6). It is by this conversion of heart, which is a work of the Spirit, that humankind will bear "fruits of life and peace" (Rom 8:6). Thus transformed from within, humankind become "peacemakers" (Matt 5:9).

To build a lasting and steadfast peace, the Church must therefore constantly renew its call to conversion, to the recognition that Christ has entrusted to us It is in a love that forgives and trusts that we shall rediscover the positive dynamics capable of transforming this world of hate and wars into a world of peace. And the love proposed to us by Christ includes the love of enemies (Luke 6:7 ff.) even to the supreme gift of one's life (John 15:13).

19 The struggle for peace with love as a principle for action requires us to "renounce violence as a means to achieve an end" (John Paul II, speech at Harare, 10 September 1988). Violence and hate are seeds that can only breed hate and violence. Non-violence has an eminently positive value that urges us to "overcome evil with good" (Rom 12,:21). It thus constitutes an instrument to achieve "the great human ideal of a universal civilization of love" (John Paul II, Speech of Catholic Jurists, 6 December 1980).

The peaceful struggle for peace requires, on the part of Christians, a recognition of what prevents its realization.

We must first recognise as major obstacles: the selfishness and indifference which breed injustice and exploitation. True peace can not be built without solidarity based on interdependence (SRS 39) and without participation of every one (John Paul II, Speech in Bolivia, 11 May, 1988).

The arms race constitutes another major obstacle to the establishment of peace. It is "a real scandal...the scandal concerns the crying disproportion between the resources of money and intelligence dedicated to the service of death and those consecrated to the service of life" (Message of Paul VI at the 2nd General Assembly of Disarmament, 1978). If the production of arms is a scandal, so is it also for the boundless trading of these arms capable of even going beyond the barriers of the blocks and above all the separation opposing North and South. Arms circulate with a quasi-absolute freedom in the different parts of the world The trading weight heavily on the international debt, since in some cases funds lent by developed countries - that enriches them in a shameful way - have served for the purchase of arms by the poorest countries.

20 The promotion of peace inevitably passes through an education for peace and through a change in public opinion (GS 82). The Church must commit itself to dispel hatred, contempt, violence, discrimination, prejudices in the minds of people and in the media. The Church must bring about new feelings which generate a peace completely inspired by the Gospel of peace.

The building of peace requires also on the regional and international level the creation of new juridical instruments and the installation of means capable of assuring its functioning.

PROMOTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

21 In our century which - to its shame - has known crimes of war and crimes against humanity, the promotion of human rights has become one of the essential requirements of the universal conscience. In a world that still experiences so much injustice and violence, so many manifestations of the exploitation and the oppression of one human by another human, it is a remarkably positive aspect and a reason for hope in the advent of a more just and more fraternal society. We are anxious to express our admiration to all those, men and women, who, at the peril of their life or, at least their freedom, work with courage and selflessness that human dignity may no longer be made fun of.

We recognise with humility that some Christians have had - and still have - their share of responsibility, at least by their lack of awareness and courage concerning violations of human rights. We rejoice that it is now better

understood that the rights of God are the final guarantee and the definitive foundation of human rights. We have to be witnesses of the fact that all human beings have been created "in the image and likeness of God", that they are infinitely loved by him and that they are called to salvation in Jesus Christ (cf. GS 24), and thus to attest to the eminent dignity of every human being, as fragile and poor as they may be. As a Church and as individuals we must be in the forefront of the struggle for the safeguarding and the promotion of human rights.

22 We maintain that the right to life and the right to freedom constitute the two poles around which is built the whole edifice of human rights. The right to life of every human being (even the child in his/her mother's womb). The right to indispensable conditions for a truly human life (satisfaction of essential needs concerning food, clothing shelter, etc; absolute forbidding of torture and of all degrading treatments of the human being cf. PT 1). Right to freedom: primarily to the freedom of thought, to the freedom of conscience and to religious freedom. Concretely the respect of religious freedom is the touchstone of the respect of other human rights (Message for the World Day for Peace 1988).

We know that great progress must still be made so that women may be duly recognised and a just place be given them in society and in the Church. We commit ourselves to work in that direction. In as much as the Church is concerned, we must take into account the praxis of Jesus and of the Apostles, and of the Pauline theology on charisms (cf. *Apostolic Letter Mulieris Dignitatem*).

We ask that the Church mobilise its efforts in favour of the promotion of the rights of the child. We ask that all efforts be made to ensure his psychological development and full human promotion of the child. We insist that the child make the apprenticeship of ethical responsibility, of understanding others, of dialogue and of solidarity, also of openness to Transcendence. The parents are the first concerned. The political community must help them especially when they are poor. It must recognise the right of children to education and favour its realisation. It must also promote a policy of the family that recognises the family as the fundamental cell of life in society (cf. *The Charter of the Rights of the Family*, Holy See, and *The Charter of the Rights of the Child*, United Nations).

We ask, finally, that the international community and the nations directly concerned recognise fully the collective rights of minorities, racial and ethnic, cultural and religious. We wish to forcefully recall that sense of dignity for every human being, and faith in the word of God, make us condemn all manifestations of racism (cf. Message for the World Day for Peace, 1989).

THE PREFERENTIAL OPTION FOR THE POOR

23 The preferential option for the poor, never exclusive nor excluding, is the fruit of love: "it is a special form of priority in the exercise of Christian charity" (SRS 41). It is a communion to the solicitude of God for the poorest of his children (cf. Ex 3:7; Ps 68:11), all attentive to the prayer of those who are deprived of everything (Ps 102, 18) to fulfil them with graces and blessings (Ps 147). But our love for the poor is also a requirement of our love in answer to the love of Jesus who identifies himself with all those who are unfortunate (Matt 25,:31-47).

To the cruel material poverty of the starving, of the homeless, of those who do not have access to medical care, is added the poverty of all the oppressed, the tortured, the exiled, and all of those who are deprived of freedom. And we must not forget all those who suffer from this moral poverty created by a society of materialism and consumerism who, in their despair, lose themselves in drugs, sex or end up in suicide. All unique and irreplaceable persons, infinitely loved by God, challenge us. Their cries must find an echo in the hearts of Christians.

24 Confronted with these different forms of poverty, the Church brings theological hope which, moreover, transforms human history. The Church does it mostly by the witnessing of love "that must be translated at all levels, in concrete actions so as to attain with firmness a series of necessary reforms" (SRS 43).

"This preferential option for the poor concerns the life of each Christian in so far as he imitates the life of Christ and it also applies to our social responsibilities and therefore to our ways of life" (SRS 42).

The option must be put into practice by a new form of community of life where each human being bears in him or her the responsibility for his or her suffering sisters or brothers. This profound fraternity in Christ must be lived in the sharing of goods according to the model of the first Christian communities (cf. Act 2,:44-45). Each Christian is, in fact, obliged by the vocation to alleviate the misery of those who suffer, not only with the "superfluous", but also with the "necessary" (SRS 31). This requirement of sharing flows simultaneously from the principle of the universal destination of goods and from the charity that urges the Christian to serve and help his neighbour (cf. Luke 10:30-37).

The new community founded on evangelical values will liberate from the "exclusive desire for profit and the craving for power" (SRS 37) by establishing solidarity and co operation. The Church must proclaim, in season and out of season, these essential values of detachment in love.

DEVELOPMENT, A NEW NAME FOR PEACE

25 "Development is the new name for peace": this startling phrase by Paul VI, taken up by John Paul II, has as its aim a better understanding of the disappearance of misery and hunger whose victims are hundreds upon hundreds of millions of human beings; it must become one of the essential objectives of contemporary humanity, it is at the same time the most urgent and most encompassing, because it has repercussions on all the world problems. It is good to realize that this request is now generally well recognised even if we are, in fact, far from sufficiently applying it.

In spite of its enormous complexity we wish to state that the task does not surpass the possibilities of a humanity that has revealed itself capable of the most extraordinary scientific and technological achievements. Serious scientific studies have established that our planet earth enjoys all the necessary resources, on condition that they be utilised judiciously and with solidarity; that, more particularly, extreme riches of some within a nation as between nations, does not coexist with the extreme misery of others! Our faith in the infinite goodness of God the Creator and in his wisdom gives us a supreme confidence. The words from Deuteronomy "there will be no poor among you" (15:4) are both a promise and a commandment that we must interpret at the level of humanity as a whole. Universal solidarity in favour of development is a categorical imperative of the unity of humanity and of its fraternity in God the Creator.

We wish to point out that this ethical imperative touches on the development of every human being and of all the human being in all dimensions: cultural, relational, religious, as well as in psychological needs. It is more a matter of being than of possessing (cf. SRS 28). As a result the development of a people must not only be economical, but religious and also cultural in the widest meaning of the term.

26 Each people is first responsible for its own development, starting from its own potential and historical particularities. Other peoples must entirely respect their freedom. More particularly, peoples who are economically developed must avoid all economical, political or cultural imperialism towards it.

With respect to the indispensable solidarity of rich countries towards poor countries, it must be expressed in terms of mutual aid and even more so in terms of justice. All structures of exploitation and oppression on their part, be they due to governments or to industrial or commercial organisations must be considered as structures of sin and must therefore disappear at the benefit of new structures that are creators of a new world economic order and of solidarity.

27 Both justice and solidarity demand that the question of international debt receive solutions permitting the poor peoples concerned not only to not experience an unbearable economic recession, but also to advance on the way to an authentic development (cf. For an ethical approach to the international debt, Pontifical Commission *Iustitia et Pax*). The situation of international imbalance demands in-depth reforms: "the reform of the international commercial system, burdened by protectionism and by growing bilateralism; the reform or the international monetary and financial system, of which we agree today to recognize its insufficiency; the problem of technological exchanges and of their proper usage; the necessity to revise the structure of the existing International Organisations, in the framework of an international juridical order" (SRS 43).

28 We add this essential request: that contemporary humanity may reverse the actual priority given to military spending which mobilises fantastic sums of money consecrated to machines of death, in search for an ever fleeting security, to the benefit of the joint cooperation for development. It could in this way pick up the great challenges of interhuman solidarity. Such are also its opportunities: not only that of its survival, but much more that of the great benefit for all of a more just and interdependent world, where no one would lack what is necessary for them. The dynamics of love and hope coming to us from God in Jesus Christ urge us to work with courage, patience and even enthusiasm so that contemporary humanity may pick up the great challenge of peace and solidarity.

THE ECOLOGICAL PROBLEM

29 Economic and technical developments based on the sole criteria of quantitative growth and of productivity cause great damages to the totality of nature and to its delicate ecological balances. We are just barely beginning to become conscious of the disaster threatening us. Problems have taken a planetary dimension: we need only think about those concerning pollution (sulphuric anhydride, nitrogen oxides and carbonic gases), special wastes and their consequences on the atmosphere and the ozone layer (greenhouse effect). In another area, abusive genetic manipulations threaten also the internal laws of Creation (cloning-chimera).

It is from God the Creator that we have received our mission to subdue the earth and all that is in it (Gen 1:28). The Church's concern for the conservation and improvement of our environment is therefore linked to this commandment of God. Consequently, "the domination of mankind over the earth is not an absolute power and, in the frame of visible nature,

we are submitted not only to biological laws, but also to moral laws that cannot be transgressed with impunity" (SRS 34). Our ethical responsibility encompasses the whole of human activities: cultural, scientific, technical, economic, political. Each person must feel personally involved by their lifestyle in this responsibility.

30 In the exercises of this stewardship, all are jointly responsible. It cannot be guided by short-term considerations or by a selfish quest. It shall rather be taken into consideration that all created goods are destined for the good of all humanity. The use of natural resources must aim for the service of the integral development of the actual and future generations (Speech by John Paul II at the United Nations Centre, Nairobi, 18th August, 1985). Therefore we do not have the right to waste, in a lawless way, the limited resources of nature, to get involved in projects whose consequences are not all controlled and which can trigger irreversible processes for the environment and for the human species itself. More particularly, genetic manipulations must be considered with extreme caution.

The contribution of the scientific community is indispensable for the suggesting of technical solutions to the actual ecological problems. It is a duty for political authorities to adopt, without delay, measures capable of answering this frightening challenge. The trans-frontiers dimensions of these problems requires a concerted effort at all levels, local, regional and international.

31 The task of the Church, expert in humanity, is to remind everyone of this responsibility to contribute to its awakening and to offer to the world fundamental elements of reflection, because the ecological crisis is, at its heart, of a religious and ethical nature. Creation, in fact, is a gift from God that we accept by respecting its internal law: a law of harmony. We must therefore be able to refuse developments that endanger this harmony. "Progress in the field of ecology and a growing awareness of the need to protect and conserve certain natural non-renewable resources are in harmony with the requirements of a true stewardship. God is glorified when creation serves the integral development of the whole human family" (ibid).

CONCLUSION: THE POWER OF PRAYER

32 For the Christian, the concern for peace, justice and creation is not limited to the analysis of the threats hanging over them but also to the proposition (in the light of the Gospel) in love and hope, of "principles of reflection", of "criteria of judgment" and of "directives for action".

In recognising peace, justice and creation as gifts from God, wounded by

human sinfulness but renewed by the death and resurrection of Christ, the Christian commitment finds its fulfilment only in the prayer of praise and intercession addressed to the Father, through the Son in the unity of the Spirit.

We have "the conviction that peace goes far beyond human efforts, particularly in the actual state of the world and, therefore, beyond us all. This is why we pray for Peace" (John Paul II, Closing Speech, Assisi 1986). And this prayer is already itself a most effective action; Mark 11:20-26). The prayer directed with humility and repentance to the "just" God will also be force of justice (Luke 18:7).

33 The whole creation itself is tending towards the rest of the Lord, sign of the Covenant and time for adoration. It is this adoration which confers meaning and harmony to God's work (Gen 2:2-3; Ps 94). By observing this time of praise willed by God, we celebrate the covenant. Thus time itself is consecrated to God. To sanctify the Lord's Day is, having eliminated the defilement brought about by our activity, to go back to the origins and celebrate the Resurrection of Christ. It is a sacramental anticipation of our entry into the eternal glory of God (Heb 4:9-11): "the glory of God is humankind fully alive; the vision of God is the glory of humankind" (Irenaeus).

The notion of the weekly rest is expanded to the sabbatical year and to the year of the Jubilee (Lev 25, 8-18). Slaves were freed, debts were forgiven and everyone found himself at a new beginning where the universe was regenerated by the Creator's own hands. The proposition of a Jubilee Year, as an act of repentance, as a fruit of love, as obedience to the commandment of God and as a new commitment of humanity in the eternal covenant sealed in Christ, constitutes a specific contribution of the Christian to the necessary promotion of justice, peace and the integrity of creation.

Christ Himself invites us to celebrate the new Jubilee in Him when, officially beginning his public ministry, he proclaims: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor; he has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord. Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing" (Luke 4:18-22).

(March 1989)

Covenanting for justice, peace and the integrity of creation

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The second draft document for the convocation is specific in stating the purpose of the convocation:

> We are living between the flood and the rainbow: between the threats to life, on the one side, and God's promise for a new earth and a new heaven on the other. That is why we have gathered in Seoul to covenant for justice, peace and the integrity of creation.

My intention is to address three specific issues, already mentioned in the document, that need to be further clarified as we move into working groups to tackle the tasks that lie ahead of us.

The **first** is, what does it mean to covenant for justice, peace and the integrity of creation? There are many understandings of the term in our several Christian traditions. Furthermore, the term is also used in many of our languages to refer to human agreements, pacts or alliances. Our concern is not to get bogged down in any of these usages, be they confessional or secular, but rather to come to a common, biblically based, working understanding of what it means to covenant for justice, peace and the integrity of creation at this time of crisis. What is the intention of this covenanting and what do we hope to achieve by it?

Without necessarily excluding all the insightful things that have been said in the document about what it means to believe in God as a covenanting God, the request is that we concentrate on paragraphs 131 to 137 as the basis for our common understanding of what it means to covenant for justice, peace and the integrity of creation.

Implicit in these paragraphs is the fact that God's covenant with human beings and through them with the whole creation is not an agreement or an alliance between equal partners. Rather, it is an oath or a promise

given by God. God's covenant is an expression of God's grace. God keeps covenant and is faithful. In Jesus Christ, crucified and risen, God's covenant has been made for all time, is open to all, breaking through all national, class, racial, gender and other boundaries.

The other side of this assertion, also implicit in paragraphs 131 -137, is that God does not break covenant. It is we, human beings, who break covenant, and have to renew our covenant with God. Our disobedience in breaking the covenant is expressed primarily in denying the truth that the world belongs to God - a belonging that God expresses not in ownership or possessiveness as humanly understood but by the pathos of love which is made known in God's parental yearning for and suffering with the whole creation. To put it another way, we understand the crisis of our times as caused in essence by human arrogance and disobedience which calls for repentance and the need to renew our covenant with God. This is why we have as the basis of our covenanting "the covenant renewal ceremony" as it is sketched out in the Bible. To say it simply, when we speak of covenanting we are talking of renewing our covenant with God. It is a process of remembering what God has done and then repenting and returning to God.

This process has implications also for our relationships with one another, for covenant renewal is never simply an individual act. It is a corporate act. In renewing our covenant with God we at one and the same covenant with each other. At this point, we encounter a whole complex of relationships that are changed and shaped by the renewal of our covenant with God.

1 We are called upon to reconstitute ourselves as a covenant community that is open to God and to each other in a process that recognises but does not accept as final or determinative the various differences and divisions that exist among us.

2 We are called to be an open community that is turned towards all those, including the groaning creation, that are struggling and aspiring for the justice that makes for wholeness, shalom, and integrity

3 We are called upon to join hands with all persons of good-will who are engaged in the same struggle for justice, in fact, quite often, precede us in the struggle for justice, peace and the integrity of creation.

The suggestion, therefore, is that we use paragraphs 131 - 137 as the basis for an introduction to one process of covenanting or rather renewal of the covenant that embraces both the Affirmations and the Acts of Covenanting. To recapitulate, this process has five parts: remembering

God's initiating grace as the foundation upon which our covenants with one another can be made and kept, professing our faith and identifying the non-negotiable elements of our common faith, renouncing the idols of our time that attempt to claim our allegiance, and opening ourselves to be a covenant community for responsibility and service within the whole community.

Much of this process will form an important part of our daily worship. There are, however, several important parts of the process requiring us to manifest our obedience concretely as a covenant community. There are given in draft form in the Affirmation and Acts of Covenanting. Both these parts belong together in one act of covenanting.

In the Affirmations we will do two things, (a) profess our faith and state the non-negotiable elements of our common faith and (b) renounce the idols, be they ideologies, policies or power-structures that hold the people and the creation in bondage.

The Acts of Covenanting are not three separate acts but are three examples of three facets of the same covenant. In taking this position we run into the **second** issue, namely, the inter-connections between justice, peace and integrity of creation. Those who daily have to deal with the problems of injustice, the lack of peace and the violence done to the creation do not separate out these concerns. They are experienced as one. However, in ecumenical discussions we have constantly been stymied by the internecine wranglings that have been carried on between the proponents of these three concerns. At this convocation we want to break through this impasse. It is our contention that there is but one struggle for the concerns of justice, peace and the integrity of creation but with three entry points. In large measure it is the context that determines which of these three is the primary entry point and is to provide the focus for articulating the inter relatedness of the three. Yet, without negating this approach, we also want to say that justice, peace and the integrity of creation are not three distinct concerns that are geographically determined, but are three facets of the same concern, and that all three concerns in varying degrees are present in each contextual struggle for JPIC. Consequently, a global approach to these concerns is also necessary if we are to support each other in our struggles. At this convocation we will attempt to keep the tension that is necessary between the global and contextual approaches to covenanting for JPIC.

Having said this, I want to add the observation that whether we are dealing with the issues of peace or the environment or human rights, the key for understanding and tackling these issues is the struggle and aspirations for justice. Justice upholds the wholeness of creation and is the indispensable

component of true peace.

Now to some practical considerations with regard to the three examples of covenanting of joint action for JPIC.

(i) The WCC Central Committee meeting in Moscow (July 1989) decided that the convocation restrict itself to three examples or facets of one act of covenanting: (a) the international economic order and the debt crisis, (b) militarism and total security strategies, (c) the "greenhouse effect" or the gradual warming of the earth's atmosphere. The dangers these pose have been spelled out in the document. In dealing with these three examples or facets of one act of covenanting we have to do two things. On the one hand, we have to find concrete ways for seeking alternatives, as for example, "a culture of non-violence". On the other hand, we also want to work for and support initiatives and actions that are aimed at resisting the destructive trends that express themselves in these three global issues. In doing these two things, it will be impossible to give an exhaustive list of all the things that can be done. To try to do so will be to give an impossibly long list that could easily frustrate and confuse people. Rather, all that is needed are a few convincing and informing examples of how people can engage themselves specifically in covenanted and committed action for justice, peace and the integrity of creation both in global networks of solidarity for action and in their own specific contexts.

(ii) It is important that we deal with racism and sexism which are the over-arching structures of sin that are implicit in these three issues, and how they affect human lives and the creation.

(iii) Since these are but three of many global examples of injustice, unpeace and the destruction of the environment, we must be conscious of the fact that they do not exhaust the totality of our concern for justice, peace and the integrity of creation. In part to rectify this problem, the organisers have provided opportunities, especially in sessions 26 and 31 of the convocation for local, inter-national and inter-regional covenants; and three members of the JPIC Preparatory group, Diane Cooper, Roger Velasquez, Ulrich Duchrow will be available from the beginning of the convocation to help you with these. While these covenants will not be adopted by the full plenary of the convocation, they will be received and celebrated.

The **third** issue has to do with the term "we" that is used time and again not only in the document but also in my presentation! Who is this "we" and whom does it represent? Stated simply, the term "we" refers to those of us who are gathered in Seoul to covenant together for justice, peace and the integrity of creation. But as yet, we are still not really a "we". We

come from many parts of the world, from different churches with different traditions. The hope is that at least by the end of the convocation, if not before, our life together in worship, in debate and in the sharing of our stories or testimonies, will indeed make us by the grace of God a community that is drawn together in covenant solidarity to confess our faith in Jesus Christ, the life of the world, to the glory of the triune God, and to resist the threats to life in our time.

Between the flood and the rainbow

Second Draft Document on Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation

INTRODUCTION

BETWEEN THE FLOOD AND THE RAINBOW

1 We are living between the flood and the rainbow: between the threats to life, on the one side, and God's promise for a new earth and a new heaven on the other. That is why we have gathered in Seoul to covenant for justice, peace and the integrity of creation. Ours is a time of profound crises, the catastrophic climax of which probably lies ahead.

2 The truth is, we find ourselves confronted by new and complexly interwoven threats to life :

- by entrenched and deadly forms of injustice: while a few of earth's citizens enjoy unprecedented affluence, millions languish in debilitating poverty, hunger and oppression;

- by universal violence: wars and preparations for still greater wars persist, and violence in many guises stalks the earth;

- by a disintegrating natural order: the processes upon which life itself depends are being systematically undermined by human pride of mastery and human sloth.

3 In such a time, we believe, the Spirit of God is speaking to the churches with great urgency; and the Spirit's fundamental message is this: repent, seek justice, peace and the integrity of creation!

THE WORLD BELONGS TO GOD, EARTH IS BELOVED OF GOD

4 Therefore we urge all who claim the faith of Jesus, the Christ: let us together, and in all areas of our common life and work, seek the imagination, wisdom and courage that is required of those who hear this directive of the Triune God. For too long and too uncritically, Christians have permitted their mission to be coloured by the causes and programmes

of their various confessions, cultures, states and empires. But it is the earth that God wills to mend! With too little critical acumen, Christians have acquiesced in prideful human attempts to possess and dominate creation. But the world belongs to God! Too consistently throughout its long history (and still today!), the Christian religion has manifested a great ambiguity with respect to the fate of the earth. But the gospel of the Word made flesh proclaims a world beloved of God (Jn. 3:16).

POINTERS OF HOPE

5 In marked contrast to the disobedience of many that result in injustice, violence and the abuse of creation is the response of suffering people, - 'the poor' - throughout the world. Despite violence and reprisals, their demands have not diminished. The struggles of people to protect life and the environment have generated echoes all over the world; and it has been their determination for life that has often moved governments and international organisations to respond. We discern clear signs of God working in history through people. Through the dedication of people, God is challenging us to resist the threats to life. Through the sacrifice of the innocent, God is calling us to repent. Through the many nameless martyrs of our time, God's pain and suffering is being revealed in human history. Through them we hear the voice of God saying that our hope is based on the crucified and risen Christ.

6 Let us then put behind us once and for all the false piety that issues in indifference. In the name of the one Sovereign and Shepherd of history, let us renounce both human striving for unqualified dominion and human refusal of responsible servanthood. And let us all renew our covenant with the One who declares, "all the families of the earth are mine".

COVENANT

7 The informing metaphor throughout the document is that of the covenant. This is of course more than a mere metaphor for Christians, and it cannot be developed in a full and satisfactory manner in a short work of this nature. Through it, however, we wish to focus our thoughts so that this might be a work of true theological praxis. It is impossible to consider God's covenant with us in a purely theoretical manner. To reflect on such a theme, rightly, is to renew our covenant with the One to whom the world 'belongs'. the One for whom this fragile planet and all of its creatures is an object of abiding and compassionate love. Such a renewal of the covenant has practical implications not least of which is to enter into solidarity with the suffering people themselves: those whose rights are protected by God; those who refuse to give up on their demands for justice, peace and the integrity of creation. In renewing our covenant with God, we also join hands with the many concerned scientists and experts who are refusing to cooperate in ventures that threaten life and who are

working for the realisation of justice, peace and the integrity of creation.

THE REALITIES WE FACE

8 As far as can be judged, the present historical moment confronts the global community with multifold threats so urgent, cumulative, and interconnected that they may represent the beginnings of a life and death struggle for survival on this planet. These threats may be surveyed and articulated by examining the three great instabilities that are presupposed by the theme of our deliberations: gross economic and other forms of injustice: war, international violence, and the abiding prospect of nuclear confrontation; and the systematic degradation of the natural order.

9 Consider the following data:

- every minute the nations of the world spend 1.8 millions of US dollars on military armaments;

- every hour 1,500 children die from hunger-related causes;

- every day a species becomes extinct;

- every week during the 1980s more people were detained, tortured, assassinated, made refugee, or in other ways violated by acts of repressive regimes than at any other time in history;

- every month the world's economic system adds over 7.5 billions of US dollars to the catastrophically unbearable debt burden of more than $1,500 billion now resting on the shoulders of Third World peoples;

- every year an area of tropical forest three-quarters the size of Korea is destroyed and lost;

- every decade, if present global warming trends continue, the temperature of the earth's atmosphere could rise dramatically (between 1.5 and 4.5 degrees Celsius) with a resultant rise in sea levels that would have disastrous consequences, particularly for coastal areas of all earth's land masses.

10 Such data[1] illustrates humanity's profound violations of justice, peace, and the integrity of creation. Clearly, the overarching challenge of our time is nothing short of a radical transformation of society, with special reference to our human expectations and lifestyle, and to our way of organising power. Unless vast changes are introduced today, the

consequences for tomorrow will be catastrophic.

THE REIGN OF INJUSTICE

THE SCANDAL OF POVERTY

11 More than 950 million human beings are deprived of the basic necessities of life today. UNICEF reports that 40,000 children die each day of hunger-related causes, and 30 million people perish every year from under-nourishment. The poorest fifth of the world's human population receives less than 2 per cent of earth's economic products, while the most affluent fifth consumes 74 per cent of it. The International Labour Organisation indicates that roughly three out of ten people in the Third World countries have received no increase in their incomes - and that some have experienced a decrease - since 1960.

12 Poverty, moreover, all too frequently encourages repression and victimisation, causes political instability, leads to overt violence, and contributes to such environmental problems as soil erosion, desertification, and the destruction of rain forests. Even as poverty increases in the Third World, the rich, industrialised countries are themselves experiencing what has been called 'new poverty'. Recent studies indicate that millions of people also in rich nations can now be characterised as poor.

13 It is important that poverty not be made into an abstraction. To be poor is to live daily on the edge of despair. Poverty mutilates the human spirit. It makes people refugees in their own homes, alienating them from one another and conditioning their communal, familial and personal existence at every turn. A rudimentary sense of insecurity tends to displace and discourage every instinct towards self-confidence; and the natural yearnings of the human spirit are frustrated again and again. Unless awakened to struggle for justice, to be poor is to be dehumanised, voiceless, marginalised, and at the mercy of the powerful.

14 Finally, it can even be more devastating; for in the end poverty begets fatalisation. For those exposed to prolonged states of poverty, the only resolution seems to be resignation. One accepts the situation as inevitable, not susceptible to change. Poverty thus becomes a psychic state, an outlook, even a world view. The powerful anticipate and capitalise on this development amongst the poor. Political and economic systems assume it! Such systems enshrine a permanent paternalism in relation to the poor, thus completing the vicious circle of dependency and fatalisation.

15 The debt crisis is perhaps the most blatant cause of poverty in our world today. Amongst the Third World nations, debtor countries owe more

than 1,500 billions of US dollars to creditors in wealthy nations. Some debtor nations suffer a net outflow of capital from their countries into the pockets of the wealthy as service on past debt exceeds the influx of new funds. Our present world economic system ensures that money will inevitably flow towards the affluent and away from those peoples whose debts are most debilitating. The wealth of Northern peoples must be seen as 'the other side' of poverty in the Southern hemisphere.

16 Such language may communicate dimensions of 'the scandal of poverty'; but we shall only begin to comprehend this scandal if we listen to the poor themselves. A young poet, a twelve-year-old Korean girl who lives in a poverty-stricken section of the great city of Seoul, writes

My mother's name is worry.
In summer, my mother worries about water;
In winter, she worries about coal briquets,
and all the year long she worries about rice.

In daytime, my mother worries about living;
At night, she worries for children,
and all day long she worries and worries.

Then, my mother's name is worry.
My father's name is drunken frenzy.
And mine is tear and sigh.

17 The pathos and poignancy present in contemporary forms of global poverty can only be felt, however, by those who become aware of the enormous wealth with which it co-exists. In Seoul, as in most of the megapoloi of the planet, the situation of the poor is highlighted by their proximity to those who live in unprecedented affluence. Deprivation in the midst of plenty, with the gap between rich and poor becoming ever greater: this is the true scandal of poverty in our world!

VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS

18 The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1968) states that "the inherent dignity and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world". This commits all member states of the United Nations to the promotion and protection of basic human rights.

19 Despite this, however, the quest for human dignity is largely ignored and, in many instances, massively threatened. Racial discrimination, torture, disappearances, extra-judicial executions, and the like constitute obvious and even obscene violations of the "inherent dignity" of the human

person. But unless the nations can achieve more basic and humane agreements on such matters as civil and cultural rights, the rights of racial, religious, and linguistic minorities, the rights of prisoners and the question of capital punishment, etc, little positive advance will be made toward the goal of dignity for all persons.

20 The number of nations in which gross human rights violations occur is on the increase. Public unrest due to poverty and the denial of life's basic necessities often leads to massive repression. Governments often justify such repression by appealing to national security interests. Invoking the principle of non-interference in their internal affairs, many of these states succeed in keeping the international public ignorant of the full extent of the violations taking place. Human rights surveillance groups, however, document the fact that in these same states violations continue unabated.

21 In relation to the general category of human rights and dignities, two specific problems have emerged in our time requiring urgent attention. One concerns the efforts of ethnic and national groupings throughout the world to retain or reclaim their identity. These minorities struggle in the face of dominant cultures to preserve their own languages, cultures, and religions and to achieve a measure of genuine autonomy within their larger societies. Although there are impressive instances of governments revising or creating legislation by which such aspirations may be honoured, in most cases these legitimate hopes have been ignored or suppressed.

22 The second problem concerns the growing refugee population, a worldwide phenomenon. Civil war, poverty, lack of food, work, or shelter, religious discrimination and the deterioration of the environment are fundamental causes of the dramatic increase in the numbers of refugees. The plight of the refugees is aggravated by the refusal of many governments to admit asylum-seekers, by the practice of expulsion without due process of law, and by brutality on the part of military and paramilitary forces. International response to this situation is at best marginal. On the whole, where it is not explicit it must be regarded as implicit violation of the international conventions respecting refugees.

THE SIN OF SEXISM

I am a broken reed, airy nothing,
devoid of dignity
dignity of a woman.

I am a slum dweller,
an - "anti-social element"
You say, I make your city dirty.
Another violation of my fundamental rights

not questioned by anybody.

What are human rights to me?
My humanness is abolished.
I wait near the water tap even after midnight
for a pot of water.
My life is cheap,
My time is cheap,
My dignity is cheap,
My labour is cheap.[2]

23 Although situations vary among countries and regions of the world, women share a common struggle; they all suffer from violations of their personhood because of a pervasive sexism. In most cultures, women are less highly valued than men, and are accorded less respect. Habitually, men have assumed the right to determine the goals and values of their societies, thus relegating women to subordinate and often subservient roles.

24 Particularly where sexism is aggravated and augmented by issues of race and class, women suffer excessively. In such situations, the hierarchic ordering of society ensures that women usually find themselves in the lower, and frequently lowest places of significance: they receive less love and attention as babies, less education as girls, fewer options for employment, less pay as workers, less food as family members, less justice in the courts, and fewer opportunities to influence the decision-making processes that affect their lives.

25 According to a recent United Nations report, "women make up half the world's population, work almost two-thirds of all man-hours [sic], receive a tenth of the world's income, and own less than a hundredth part of the world's wealth". Poverty does not affect men, women and children in the same way. In all parts of the world, the percentage of women belonging to the poorest sectors of society is increasing dramatically. Some economists today speak of "the feminisation of poverty".

26 Everywhere in our world, women are subjected to practices that reduce them to sexual objects that can be purchased like other goods. Girls and women are recruited and sold for sexual use, social status, or reproductive services. As a way out of severe economic pressures, many women, particularly in Third World societies, have to offer themselves as mail-order brides or are driven into prostitution. Rape, battering, harassment and other forms of assault continue to endanger and humiliate women, and the overall problem is compounded by the power of subtle and cynical advertising and media presentation.

27 Women themselves attribute much of their oppression to the ubiquitous and entrenched structures of patriarchy, which both philosophically and practically lead to the dehumanisation of men as well as women, robbing both of genuine relatedness between the sexes.

28 Many women in our churches are chagrined that such patriarchalism persists also within the Christian community Biblical faith affirms that both women and men - and the two together - are created as "image of God".

This affirmation has stood for two thousand years as the corner stone of Christian anthropology; yet we are waiting still for the churches clearly to denounce the sin of sexism, actively to support women in their struggle against oppression, and concretely to provide opportunities for women to bring all their gifts into the life and ministry of the churches. Jesus confronted the sexism of his own society by calling women into full participation in the disciple community. In that spirit, the member churches of the World Council of Churches have committed themselves to the "Ecumenical Decade of Churches in Solidarity with Women."

THE TENACITY OF RACISM

I tear my hungry babe from my breast
To come and care for yours.
Yours grow up fine,
But, oh God, not mine!
From school and beach yours I fetch
And wonder if school mine did reach.

Your man comes home at night
A welcome and delight.
Wineglass in hand,
Red chair in front of fire bright.
To bed you go and make love.

My bed is empty and cold
For all my energy is drained away.
My man and I too soon feel old.
Can you still look me in the eye
And ask me what's wrong
After you've stripped me to the bone?

You win and take everything I own
And still you want my home.
What have I done that you won't leave me alone?

29 Entitled "Leave Me Alone!" this poem of Gladys Thomas, a black South African writer, expresses in words and in "sighs too deep for words" the daily experience of many of her compatriots. It is illustrative of the tenacious and devastating force of racism.

30 Not only in the land of Gladys Thomas but throughout the world racism continues to violate the fundamental rights and dignities of vast numbers of human beings. Through biased educational, legislative, legal, medical and religious practices, and through deeply rooted linguistic and other conventions and taboos, people are systematically robbed of their humanity and their hope.

31 Classical racism - namely, the oppression of black people by white people - persists throughout the world. In some places, notably Europe and North America, it is on the increase. The most extreme manifestation of classical racism is South Africa, where a minority government continues to impose its white supremacist policies on the majority black population. Despite changes in the political leadership of that country, the crisis remains fundamentally unchanged. The black population is excluded from effective representation in national government and black persons can claim citizenship in name only.

32 Racism is increasing also and in subtle as well as overt and pernicious ways, in relation to other human groupings. To name a few: migrant workers, immigrants, foreign students, and the travelling people formerly called "gypsies". In addition, within some parts of Africa, hostilities between rival tribes must be assessed as being essentially racial conflicts.

33 Racial discrimination also remains the core cause of the gross indignities suffered by indigenous peoples. In many places, these peoples are no more than vestiges of the original population, the survivors of virtual genocides carried out by colonial powers in the past. Without exception, they exist on the margins of the dominant societies in which they live, where they struggle to survive in the face of assaults against their land, cultures, and sacred traditions. In addition to the unjust theft of their original lands, their continued oppression causes them extreme spiritual, psychological and physical suffering.

34 Christians today dare not speak of racism without examining their own consciences and the influence of their religion. The Holocaust of the Jews was prepared for by centuries of theological, liturgical and symbolic "Christian" practices. Ancient rivalries between Christianity and Islam have contributed permanently to Euro-American attitudes towards the peoples of the Near East, and the triumphalism of Western Christendom still informs our preconceptions and images of Africa, Indian, and Oriental

peoples. Even though the ecumenical community has rejected the theological support of racism, naming it heresy, Christian complicity in racist thought and behaviour is still far too conspicuous.

35 Nations must engage in combating the reign of injustice but this alone is not sufficient: and a new international order based on just economic relations, strengthened by international law, and institutionally enforced is required. Christians are called to work for this order, and to explore anew their worldly responsibilities as a people of the covenant.

THE REIGN OF VIOLENCE

WARS AFTER "THE WAR"

36 In spite of rhetorical conventions which perpetuate the assumption that the world has known peace since the end of World War II, the global context in which we live is decidedly *not* "a world at peace". Our present international situation with respect to militarisation and widespread violence is more ominous than ever before. Over one hundred wars have been fought since 1945. Numerous "low intensity" and other conflicts are being waged today in countless countries, with tragic consequences for both human beings and the natural order. At the same time, militarisation, a spiralling arms trade, and the availability of huge arsenals of nuclear, conventional and other weapons threaten the human species and all living creatures. Clearly, for the sake of planetary survival, there needs to be a transformation of our present system of global security from a deterrence secured through "mutually assured destruction" (MAD) to a legally-constituted equilibrium of political power.

37 As with injustice, so with war: we must cease reducing it to an abstraction! Only those who can feel the pain and anguish of warfare are likely to become peacemakers. Again we must listen to the victims!

Voice From the Killing Fields

They have tried to make you another dead body
in the daily count of twenty or forty
so motivated they were
they broke their ceasefire
to tick you off
on their hitlist.

The long oval of your face
with eyes sparking fire
was with me all night
your eloquent hands

your emphatic voice
the seashells speaking of life's beauty
from pink to mother of pearl.

We will affirm
the preciousness of life
no more atrocities
not even our own
there must be an end to slaughter.

They can bump off a few of us but not all
of we are many
You paid the price for nurturing fearlessness
in all of us.

The shots fell on Jaffna peninsula
this fourth week of September
when Pol Pot rekindled the fire of civil war in
Kampuchea
but your voice rings out to raise the skeletons
from the killing fields of your island.[3]

THE NUCLEAR THREAT

38 Despite some progress in arms control on the part of the superpowers, new and yet more deadly nuclear weapons continue to be produced, tested, and deployed by the United States and the Soviet Union as well as by France, Great Britain, and China. Moreover, in an effort to enhance their own security through military preparedness, these countries have acquiesced in the spread of dangerous technology around the world. India, Israel, Pakistan and South Africa have now, apparently, become nuclear powers. Argentina and Brazil have secretly pursued a programme of nuclear weapons capability, and Iran, Libya, Taiwan and South Korea have taken steps to acquire technology necessary for manufacturing nuclear weapons. Nuclear war by inadvertence - by human miscalculation or technical malfunction - remains an ever-present possibility. Nor can nuclear war by design be ruled out.

39 The Sixth Assembly of the World Council of Churches declared that "the time has come when the churches must unequivocally declare that the production and deployment as well as the use of nuclear weapons are a crime against humanity..." The proliferation of nuclear weapons, the risk of failure, and the prospect of deliberate usage are more than adequate reasons why the argument of deterrence must be surpassed.

MILITARISATION OF THIRD WORLD NATIONS

40 By continuing further to arm themselves, the great powers stimulate and often directly assist in the militarisation of many other countries. As noted above, they have already contributed significantly to nuclear proliferation. There seems also to be an increasing proliferation of chemical weaponry. While this information is difficult to secure, it is believed that as many as 20 countries outside the NATO/Warsaw Pact have chemical weapons in their arsenals. The spectre of chemical warfare has recently received worldwide publicity. Unconscionable as it may be, one reason for propagating reports of chemical-weapon proliferation is to stimulate the sales of equipment designed to counter the effects of chemical warfare. Aggressive sales techniques of this nature now reach deeply into the continents of Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

41 The potential dangers to global security for the further spread of these diverse military technologies are great. Their possession by stronger countries within the Third World is provoking an uneven growth of power in those regions. This constitutes one of the most delicate problems of international relations at the present time.

42 In 1989, the military budgets of Third World countries are about seven times greater than they were in 1960. Although extreme poverty and indebtedness have halted the projected long term rise in arms imports, it is still the case that 75 per cent of all arms imports are purchased by these countries. This exacerbates the already catastrophic debts of the nations in question, debts largely borne by their poor.

43 The militarisation of Third World and other nations is more than an objective political reality. Governments in such nations, dominated by foreign powers which have vested interests in their destinies, become preoccupied with military solutions to social problems. The consequences for the public realm include such horrors as martial law, official secrecy, the dissemination of false information, control of the media and the economy, detentions, torture, disappearances, assassinations and summary executions. Militarisation in such countries as Korea, Vietnam and Taiwan tragically divides peoples who share a common history and culture. Families are separated, enmity is created amongst kindred peoples, many are reduced to refugee status, deep cultural and societal discord is occasioned, and there is untold suffering for multitudes of human beings.

44 Ending the reign of violence is one of the most urgent political tasks of our epoch. To achieve this, the quest for security must be seen in comprehensive terms, that is as implying the security of all. Humanity will not survive unless we can create the political and economic conditions under which there remains no motive for any state to wish for the possession

of today's lethal weapons, concretely this means that humankind will not survive unless we overcome the institution of war as a method for settling disputes. Christians are summoned to work for this peaceful order and to explore anew their covenant with the Author of Peace.

THE DISINTEGRATION OF CREATION

A DANGEROUS EXPERIMENT

45 The integrity of creation is gravely threatened by factors that are largely of human origin. Life on our planet is dependent upon the harmonious and complex interacting of nature. Life is endangered when the delicate balance of these natural processes is disrupted. We are moving towards such a precarious situation in our present historical moment. Humanity has been conducting an enormous experiment with the creation, the ultimate consequence of which could be catastrophic.

46 The data of environmental deterioration is readily available, and no one today can avoid its impact. It needs, however, to be supplemented by testimony of a more immediate nature. The following account provides a poignant witness to some of the causes and consequences of the crisis of nature:

My name is Anna. I am from the Marshall Islands. My people have traditionally treasured our lands and lagoons, sources of our food. My people are a sharing people who live in close interdependence not only with one another but also with our atoll homes. Now, however, we are troubled. Many of our young people see no future in life. Our land no longer feeds us. The more we eat of its fruit and of the fish in our lagoons, the sicker we become. What has happened to my people? What has happened to our land?

From 1946 to 1958, nuclear tests were held in our atolls. Some of these atolls have simply disappeared. Others are still slowly releasing radioactivity into our waters. While our older people are still suffering from radiation sickness, many of our children have genetic defects. We women feel this particularly. We think of our children.

More recently, we have been moved from some of our atolls and crowded together on Ebeye Atoll in order that our atolls could become testing grounds for advanced weapons systems. We have no traditional link with this new land; part of our identity has been taken away. Our dwelling place is overcrowded. We are poor. Our lagoon is a source of disease, not of life.

Yes, much has happened to our people. Much has happened to our land.[4]

SOME OF THE SPECIFICS

47 It is not our intention here to attempt a full description of the great instability to which that aspect of our theme entitled "the integrity of creation" points. To lend concreteness to our statement, however, it is mandatory that we name some dimensions of the manifold problem in question.

48 **Greenhouse Gases:** Basic to earth's integrity is its exchange of energy with the sun and outer space. We are presently producing gases that are causing irreparable damage to the atmosphere. These gases allow the sun's radiation to penetrate to earth but they restrict the resulting re-radiation of energy from earth back into space, thereby heating the earth. It is comparable to the warming process affected by a greenhouse.

The most deadly of these gases is carbon dioxide, which we produce as we burn oil, coal or gas. If this process continues at the present levels, it could threaten all life through dramatic rises in sea-levels and radically altered climatic conditions. To prevent such an eventuality, governments especially in industrialised nations must reduce the burning of fossil fuels by at least 50 per cent during the next 25 years.

49 **Ozone Depletion:** Earth's ozone layer, that is, the radiation shield which protects planetary life from excessive ultraviolet radiation, is being dangerously depleted. Ultraviolet radiation is damaging to genetic material, the material upon which all life depends. As we add substances to the atmosphere (particularly the so-called CFCs - chlorofluorocarbons), we destroy the shield that for milennia has protected us and all creatures.

50 **Land Degradation:** Throughout the planet, great tracts of rich farm land are sacrificed yearly to urban development, erosion, desertification or salinisation. If humankind remains indifferent to this loss, it will increasingly limit food supplies, and more conspicuously so as earth's human population multiplies. While it is estimated that the planet will experience only a 3 to 4 per cent increase in crop-land availability by the year 2000, it is likely that there will be a simultaneous population growth of 40 per cent. It should also be borne in mind that sharp increases in crop yield in the immediate past have been due to technological means, largely chemical fertilisation. There is little chance that technology will boost food production sufficient to meet the needs of an exponentially expanding population.

51 **Water quality:** Beneath the ecosystems lie great supplies of ground water, often of very high quality. This water is now being severely degraded. One of the causes is the application of pesticides, herbicides, and chemical fertilisers to agricultural land in such excess that rain and irrigation water

transport these materials into the ground waters. Also contributing to this degradation are landfill and toxic waste sites, whose leachates move into and poison the ground waters.

52 **Deforestation:** The century to date has witnessed the elimination of approximately half of all the forests in Third World countries. It is estimated that of the 8.5 million square kilometres of primary forests remaining (an expanse roughly equivalent to the USA), not only is nearly 100,000 square kilometres eliminated yearly, but another 100,000 are grossly degraded annually through slash-and-burn cultivation. This rate, moreover, is accelerating: it now appears that by the year 2000, at least half of all tropical forests will be lost, with the remainder being forfeited during the first three or four decades of the 21st century. Through deforestation, sustainable production of forest products is reduced both for local consumption and for export, watershed recharge is diminished, flood peaks are increased, drought flows are lessened, evapo-transpired water to the atmosphere is reduced with consequent potential climate modification, atmospheric carbon dioxide levels are increased. and species are driven to extinction. International disaster relief, such as was necessitated during the Bangladesh floods of 1988, is increasingly necessary for meeting flood and drought emergencies attributable, at base, to deforestation.

53 **Habitat destruction and species extinction:** Destruction and pollution of habitats are accelerating worldwide. Natural areas within urban commuting range in the northern countries are being replaced by suburban and agricultural developments. Wetland, estuarine, and coastal habitats are being degraded by urban and industrial wastes, draining, and filling, thereby reducing their contributions to fisheries, nutrient processing, and moderation of flood peaks. Atmospheric deposition of hazardous materials (acid rain) threatens the health of forests that might otherwise be preserved. We have come to a global crisis of plant and animal extinctions. In sea and coastal regions, degradation of habitats and populations or marine organisms, including those of commercial value, is continuing on a planetary scale. Increasing industrial development destroys productive coastal wetlands and reefs and affects the open oceans: pollutants are washed from the land and discharged into the oceans or deposited there from the atmosphere, with severe consequences for marine life, habitats, and fisheries.

54 **Wastes and Global Toxification:** Modern society has produced some 70,000 different kinds of chemicals: many of these are now incorporated into earth's global circulations. Scientists know very little about the impact of these chemicals on the natural order. What is known, however, is that these are substances with which life on earth has no prior interaction.

Some are known to constitute serious threats to life; others are known to be threatening to the planet's exchange of energy with the sun and outer space. Accidents like Bhopal and the pollution of the Rhine have shocked people into some incipient awareness of the threats of chemicals to the environment. Yet governments continue to allow these chemicals to be produced and dispersed throughout the soil, waters, and air. Often, when appropriate legislation restricts their use and disposal in northern industrial nations, governments in the Third World countries, needing hard currency, acquiesce to the dumping of such wastes in their territories.

55 **Unlimited Resource Exploitation:** The pressure in industrial nations for ceaseless exploitation of limited resources underlies the threats endangering the environment. Those in power in the Third World countries often press their societies towards these same practices. Yet scientific analysis as well as common sense make clear that the limited quantity of many of earth's resources should impose carefully considered constraints on their use.

56 **Use and Misuse in Bio-technology:** Modernity's technocratic mindset has been carried to its logical extreme by recent developments in bio-technology. The invention, patenting and future industrialisation of transgenic animals is a dramatic illustration of this. Even more graphic is the use of reproductive technology: tests for sex determination and the resultant abortion of female foetuses, "surrogate" motherhood, test-tube babies, etc. Such practices make women the objects of experiments that cause enormous pain and suffering. In addition, awareness is growing that some industrial applications of bio-technology can contribute to economic oppression. For example, many exports of plant-derived commodities such as vanilla, cocoa, palm oil, as well as countless fragrances and nutrients can be dramatically affected by the production of these substances through the use of genetic engineering techniques by the corporations themselves. Small farmers and whole nations within the Third World are dependent upon income from such commodities; the losses that they face on account of the new manufacturing processes could be devastating.

57 **Withstanding the disintegration of creation** must become a universal priority in our time. This is a qualitatively new challenge for which there is no historical analogy, for humankind and the ecosphere have now become an interdependent survival community. The future of life itself is at stake. An international ecological order is required if we are to find a way into the future. Christians are summoned to work for this order and to explore anew their covenant with the Creator and sustainer of all.

INTERCONNECTING DIMENSIONS OF OUR PRESENT CRISIS

"ONE WORLD OR NO WORLD"

58 Our world is one cloth. As nations and peoples we relate to each other through our common response to the interlocking issues of justice, peace, and respect for the environment. To tear the thread of any one of these affects all of them together and shreds the whole cloth. Economic exploitation and political repression kill millions of people and will claim even more victims if they are not checked. The nuclear menace is a sword of Damocles suspended above humankind, and the continuing destruction of nature raises a question mark over the very survival of the species. But what is most significant of all of this - what is grasped by too few people is that none of these threats can be combatted effectively if they are isolated from one another. The real danger lies in the fact that they are inseparably linked, and that it requires both knowledge and wisdom imaginatively to discern this linkage. In a society that rewards specialisations and discourages holistic learning, such wisdom is rare! From now on, it must be consciously pursued and nurtured.

EXEMPLIFYING THE INTERCONNECTEDNESS

59 The International Debt Crisis: Perhaps the most far-reaching example of the fundamental interconnectedness of our great crisis is seen in the present international debt crisis. Within the latter, justice is violated because vulnerable groups, especially women and children, are bearing the major cost of the debt. Moreover, the national priorities of the indebted countries are distorted because the foreign debt gives leverage to the North to press its political and economic agendas. Peace is shredded because the debt crisis undermines fragile democracies. Repayment forces governments to take highly unpopular measures almost inevitably requiring the use of military power. The integrity of creation is affected because, in order to repay its debt, the indebted nation must increase its exports. Often, this has brought marginal land under cultivation, increased reliance on chemical inputs, destroyed forests and damaged ecosystems.

60 An Example from the Philippines: The construction of the Bataan nuclear power plant in the Philippines provides another example of the interrelatedness of justice (with special reference to the debt crisis), peace and the environment. In 1976, then-President Ferdinand Marcos negotiated a US$600 million US dollar loan for a multinational corporation to build this plant in the coastal village of Morong (Bataan) in the northwestern part of the country. Although the site had high seismic activity, it was chosen primarily because of its proximity to the Subic Bay

Naval Complex, the home base of the US Seventh Fleet.

The construction uprooted hundreds of native families, destroyed large forest areas, and caused irreparable damage to the ecosystem of the region. Complications in construction forced the building costs up to 2.1 billion .

And the plant has never been used! Today, the Philippine government is required to pay US$350,000 in interest per day in its effort to repay the loan for this unused nuclear power plant. Most of the cost is borne, once again, by the poor of the country.

61 And in Ethiopia, militarisation can be shown to be the primary cause of the nation's massive hunger problem. There is good evidence that Ethiopia could have reversed the deathly advance of the desert, which cuts its food supply at the roots, by spending no more than US$50 million a year in the mid-1970s to plant trees and fight soil erosion. Instead, encouraged by external arms merchants, Addis Ababa ploughed US$275 million per year into its military machine from 1975 to 1985 in order to wage bloody battles against secessionist movements in Eritrea and Tigre. Famine struck and took the lives of one million Ethiopians. The cost of emergency relief measures amounted to US$500 million . Yet had the world the assurance that they would be used for conservation, that amount of money could have funded an entire decade of conservation efforts that would have prevented famine and helped to weave a less violence-prone social fabric.

62 Population, the Complicating Factor: Population, of course, constitutes more than an "example" of the interconnectedness of the various dimensions of our global crisis. Unbalanced and unstable population growth and distribution aggravates poverty and hunger, social conflict and environmental deterioration. While the rich countries have relatively stable populations, they consume the majority of available energy resources. Poor countries, often with rapidly expanding populations, suffer from shortages of such resources, and they are forced to meet their energy needs in ways that are frequently destructive to the environment. Coping with population growth needs to be approached with great sensitivity, in a manner that both respects the consciences of individuals and takes into account the social, political and biospheric dimensions of these interconnected problems.

THE DEEPER ROOTS OF THE PRESENT CRISIS

63 The linkages between justice, peace and the integrity of creation make it imperative that we do not tackle these issues singly and in isolation from each other. There is already a growing solidarity among suffering peoples who perceive the interconnections between these issues and are engaged

in common struggles. If we are to be in solidarity with those struggles, our responses too cannot be partial or fragmented.

There have to be common and concerted struggles in solidarity if any one of these - justice, peace and the integrity of creation - is to be realised. To do this we have to look for the deeper roots of the present crisis.

64 The examples of injustice, unpeace and the degradation of the environment that we have seen above, make it clear that the various threats to life in our time are caused by unjust and destructive economic, political and military powers. Their activities are intertwined; and they have set up comprehensive systems of injustice that propagate false values and ideologies which threaten the life of the people, other living beings and the earth.

65 An unjust world economic order is at the root of many threats to life. It has created economic, financial and social mechanisms that accelerate the increasing gap between the poor and the rich. Political and military powers have set up structures backed by national security doctrines. In collusion with economic powers, they not only prepare and wage wars, but also suppress the economic demands of the people, and devastate the natural environment with the testing and deployment of nuclear and bio-chemical weapons.

66 Modern means of production are the basis of today's economy. They provide possibilities for exploitation which never existed before. Technology has changed the nature of wear, and has equipped oppressive regimes with new and more violent means of control. The misuse of science and technology is responsible for the increasing exploitation, and, if not controlled, the destruction of the environment.

67 The systems of injustice that use these tools for control are in the final analysis an expression of the modern mindset of which we ourselves are a part. The real causes of the present predicament are to be sought in the very heart and psyche of the human creature, in attitudes, goals and values that have been ages in the making.

68 *Homo sapiens* seems always to have pursued sovereignty over all things, and, in the modern epoch, humankind has been granted exceptional knowledge on the basis of which its ancient quest of mastery has acquired ever greater credibility. Knowledge (scientia), we are assured, is power; and through power over nature and each other we thought to achieve the security for which our species has perennially striven.

69 The bid for mastery has become a way of life with us. The gaining of ever greater profits has become an unquestionable motive in economic relationships and dealings. For so long have we been preoccupied with these "values" that we are scarcely able to entertain the prospect that human beings could behave quite differently - indeed, that they have done so and, in some cultures, still do so! We do not remember and we do not see these alternative ways of being; so we find it almost impossible to extricate ourselves from an ideology of constant growth, from the exploitation of the natural order, from blind confidence in technological solutions to every problem, and from all the ills which quite naturally flow from such misplaced self-confidence and anthropocentrism.

70 But now the old allure of the mentality of human sovereignty is greatly diminished. Pursuing mastery over nature we have begun to know that we ourselves, being part of nature, may be the most pathetic victims of our quest for power. Pursuing national and super-national security, we have begun to know that we are courting nuclear holocaust. Pursuing the accumulation of wealth, we have begun to recognise the poverty of our own spirits as well as the humiliation visited upon others by our incapacity for compassion and for justice.

71 As Christians, therefore, we bear witness to the truth that our manifold crisis is at base a profoundly spiritual one. We cannot support the ideology of progress or constant growth, which still dominates the rhetoric of most of our cultures, and the economic, political and military structures spawned by them. Neither on the other hand are we prepared to adopt the way of resignation. We engage in the struggle for justice, peace and the integrity of creation in hope. Our hope is in the God of the covenant who in Jesus has inaugurated the kingdom as an alternative reality that is operative in our history and who through the power of the Holy Spirit will bring that reality to fruition.

72 On the basis of this sure hope, networks of ecumenical koinonia and dianonia throughout the church must work together to interconnect and create solidarity linkages among the churches and people's movements, including those of different ideologies and religious faiths. Given the global urgency of the threats to life and their interconnectedness, groups struggling for liberation, people's movements, peace and environmental networks, cannot afford to be separated, fragmented or pitted against each other. The struggle demands a universal solidarity among all members of the human family. The God of the covenant declares, 'all the families of the earth are mine'. Can the churches become places of dialogue and mutuality where human crises can be honestly explored and courageously confronted?

THE UNIQUE ROLE OF COMMUNICATION

73 Our discussion of the situations of injustice, the lack of peace and the pollution of our natural environment cannot end without at least pointing to the complex technical and electronic cultural environments that have come into being in our era. The relationship between these environments and the manifold threats that we have been considering is becoming increasingly evident.

74 One of the main functions of the media is to define social reality; people perceive and understand the world largely on the basis of information gathered from these sources. When there is monopoly control of the access to and flow of information, people are denied their fundamental right to know.

75 Under monopoly control, information readily becomes a commodity to be bought and sold. Sexism, for instance, continues to be legitimised, and indeed promoted, in subtle ways by the audiovisual media. Many studies show that racism is ingrained in much of today's media world, and that the mass media literally thrive on stories of conflict, war and violence. Increasingly, the media are made to serve the ideology of consumerism and extreme individualism.

76 In the hands of dictatorial regimes, the mass media are used to suppress the truth through misinformation and disinformation campaigns and to propagate the false values of their ideologies.

77 The true purpose of all communication, however, is to foster the growth of institutions and practices in society that are based on participatory and just social processes. Communication should be used to build, not divide communities. As Christians, our task is to counter the consumer ethos of the dominant media systems, and to evolve just and participatory methods of communication. Communication is a basic human right and integral to the quest for justice, peace and the integrity of creation.

THE CONFESSION OF THE COVENANT COMMUNITY

THE WORLD BELONGS TO GOD, EARTH IS BELOVED OF GOD

78 Confronted by the manifold and grave realities of the present age, we who are gathered in Seoul for this World Convocation on Justice, Peace, and the Integrity of Creation confess our faith

"The Earth is the Lord's",

The World belongs to God.
God brought it into being,
God loves and liberates it in Jesus Christ,
God dwells with it and renews its life
through the Holy Spirit.

79 This we affirm and confess over against every idolatrous claim to the possession and mastery of the world. The spiritual crisis of our epoch is a crisis of belief. Thinking ourselves gods, we have discovered that we are naked. Out of our own failure at divinity and in the face of continued pretensions to sovereignty rampant in our suffering world we cry again

The Word belongs to God!
The Triune God alone is Sovereign.

80 "The Earth is the Lord's...." (Ps. 24), yet God's ownership differs radically from the usual human perceptions of possession and power. Rather than claiming total possession, superiority and unqualified dominion, God cares for all creatures (Ps. 104). protects all that lives (Gen. 9). creates ecological spaces where life is possible (Gen. 1), and initiates relationships between different kinds of living beings for their mutual enrichment.

81 God is turned towards the whole creation in love. Jesus Christ is the incarnation of this suffering love. In his life, death and resurrection, God empties the divine Self of glory and becomes poor and vulnerable for the sake of our glory (Phil. 2:4). Thus God's ownership of the world is defined by the pathos of love - by parental yearning for and suffering with the whole creation (Rom. 8).

82 Our hope therefore, as we consider the plight of a groaning creation today, is grounded not only in God's sovereignty but in the sovereignty of God's love, over which no threat of death or decay can have ultimate sway.

A COVENANTING GOD

"I will be your God..."

83 God's orientation towards the world expresses itself in many and mysterious ways; but for biblical faith none is more significant than the belief that God is a covenanting God.

84 At the heart of the covenant is the promise and challenge "I will be your God and you shall be my people." Implicit in this is a critical as well as a constructive theological principle: on the one hand it implies the denunciation of idols ("thou shalt have no other gods!"); at the same time

it holds out the promise and possibility of people-hood, of becoming under and with the 'one God' a true community.

The Human Partner

85 God elects human beings as God's covenant partners. Out of all the creatures, God beckons to this creature to perform within the beloved creation a representative role. This creature has been granted certain gifts - reason, freedom, speech, manual dexterity - not to elevate it above the other wondrous creatures of God (Job 38 ff), but in order that it may image and reflect within the sphere of creation the tender care and compassion of the Creator. In speech, in song, in thought and planning, in vicarious solidarity with all finite beings, above all in its joy of being, the human creature is called to be God's priest and steward, and thus to participate in the building of God's kingdom of peace - *shalom.*

86 The covenant through which that vocation is given by no means excludes, however, the other creatures of God. In Hosea's articulation of it, for example, we can hear all three of the themes that have brought us together in Seoul, but perhaps especially that of the "integrity of creation".

I will make for you a covenant on that day with the
beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the
creeping things of the ground; and I will abolish
the bow, the sword, and war from the land; and I
will make you lie down in safety ... I will betroth
you to me in righteousness and in justice, in steadfast
love, and in mercy...

And in that day, says the Lord, I will answer the
heavens
and they shall answer the earth;
and the earth shall answer the grain, the wine and the
oil,
and they shall answer Jezreel ...
and I will say to Not-my-people, "You are my people";
and they shall say, "Thou art my God".

(Hos. 2:18-19. 21-23)

"All the Families of the Earth are Mine"

87 As the covenants with Noah and Abraham indicate, the intention of the biblical God is to have the whole of creation including the human community as partner. God's covenant with Israel liberated it to become a blessing to all nations (Gen. 12.17, Ex. 6.7-24). Though the covenant was repeatedly broken by God's people, God never abandoned them but

remained faithful to the divine promise to their ancestors and prophets. For God was and is committed to the creation, to its mending and completion.

88 God's covenant with Israel was focussed finally in the New Covenant in Jesus Christ, crucified and risen. In him the covenant is made open to all (1 Cor. 11:25; Mark 14:24; 1 Tim. 2:4 ff; Heb. 8:1-13). It breaks through all national, class, racial, gender and other boundaries: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female for you all are one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28).

Theological Implications of Covenanting for Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation

89 Justice, peace and the integrity of creation are distinct but interrelated ways of referring to the same fundamental reality: the goodness and wholeness of life in right relationship with God, life in fulfilling relationships among human beings and between human communities, and life in harmonious relationships with the whole of creation. This is the eschatological vision that the Hebrew Bible calls *shalom* - a vision that is exemplified in Hosea 2:18-19, 21-23.

90 When the Spirit of God is poured out on a sinful, troubled and suffering world *shalom* becomes a reality (Is. 32: 15-17). The Gospels say that the Spirit of God descended on Jesus at his baptism (Mk. 1:10; Mt. 3:16; Lk. 3:22; Jn. 1:32). In him and through him, *shalom*, the kingdom of God, becomes real in history.

91 Through Christ's parables and the miracles of healing, the kingdom of God becomes manifest as a dynamic, growing reality, transforming political, social, economic and ecological relationships. Justice, as a fruit and sign of the kingdom of God, transforms possessiveness into sharing of food and thus life (Mt. 15: 32-38); peace, as a fruit and sign of the kingdom of God, transforms the power of domination with an act of healing that brings wholeness to life (Mk. 5: 1-13). The integrity of creation, as a fruit and sign of the kingdom of God, transforms broken relationships into life in trust and confidence (Mt. 6:25-33).

92 Although the kingdom of God is yet to be realised in its fullness, through the ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, it is already operative in human history and the creation as an alternative dimension of hope. This vision of hope empowers us to resist the threats to life at this time and to commit ourselves to the realisation of justice, peace and the integrity of creation.

93 We affirm this commitment when we celebrate the eucharist as the

universal outreach of the God of the covenant (Mk. 14): "The eucharist embraces all aspects of life. It is a representative act of thanksgiving and offering on behalf of the whole world... All kinds of injustice, racism, separation and lack of freedom are radically challenged when we share in the body and blood of Christ."

94 Justice, peace and the integrity of creation are three entry points for understanding the same reality. Since they are not only inter-related but also distinct, and therefore in some tension with each other, the question arises as to which entry point has the most to commend itself as a starting point for a theological understanding of the whole. After much discussion and debate, the suggestion is that we begin our theological understanding of the whole not with any one of these three concepts but with "creation" (not "the integrity of creation").

95 When we start with creation, we come to understand that justice upholds the wholeness of creation. In the perspective of the kingdom of God, justice involves the righting of relationships, not only between human beings, but also between humanity and the earth and the things of the earth. Our concept of justice must shift away from one which protects possessions towards one that provides healing of relationships between human beings, between cultures, and between humanity and all of creation. Further, if we start by understanding ourselves as a part of the wholeness of God's creation, and understand justice as upholding creation's integrity, then peace can flow.

96 The Bible speaks of God loving justice and righteousness (Ps. 11: 7; 37: 38; 45: 7). In return, God calls human beings to practise justice so that it may fill the earth and inform every relationship.

97 In the Bible, "justice" and its correlate "righteousness" are neither inferences from God's nature nor an ethical reflection on human virtue. Rather, they refer to the loyal, compassionate and equal relating of one to another, where "the other", not "the self", is the centre of concern. This has its source in God's justice, who relates to an enslaved, marginalised, suffering people in concrete acts of deliverance from oppression (Ex. 3: 7f.).

98 Therefore, to practise justice is in turn to reflect God's justice. It is not in the first instance about claiming one's rights nor administering punishment for wrong-doing. Rather, to practise justice is to ensure that the poor and oppressed receive their due. In a prayer for the King as the upholder of justice, the Psalmist prays:

Give the King thy justice, O God,
and thy righteousness to the royal Son!
May he judge thy people with righteousness,
and the poor with justice!
Let the mountains bear prosperity for the people,
and the hills, in righteousness.
May he defend the cause of the poor of the people,
give deliverance to the needy,
and crush the oppressor.
In his days may righteousness flourish,
and peace abound, till the moon be no more.

(Ps. 72: 1-4, 7)

99 Here again, justice is what ensures the fruitfulness of the creation, and is the hope for peace. Creation can thrive and peace grows when humans respond to God's call and act according to God's justice.

100 When Jesus came preaching and enacting in his ministry the kingdom of God - the eruption of God's sovereign, just, saving power - it was good news to the captives, the poor, the hungry, and those who thirst for justice. In the kingdom of God, they saw the possibility for a new human community. They were invited to enter it, through repentance and trust, and to enjoy just relations in the Realm of God (Mt. 5: 3-6). This is the promise of the new creation.

101 We, as Christians, see the inseparable relation of justice and love in the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ. When we share in the body and blood of Christ, we say "no" to all forms and kinds of injustice and to the unjust powers of the world, and we say "yes" to Christ's way of nonviolent resistance on the cross. Through the Word and Sacrament, the all-renewing grace of God penetrates and restores human personality and dignity, provides the model for true human community, and celebrates God's redemptive action that reaches out to all the creation.

102 God's love for the whole of creation also provides the foundation for peace. This was revealed in Jesus Christ "as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth: (Eph. 1:9). "For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell and through him to reconcile to himself all things making peace by the blood of his cross" (Col, 1: 19f). Through his death on the cross, in that supreme act of sacrificial love, Jesus Christ destroyed sin and hatred, and reconciled in one body those who were hostile (Eph. 2: 16; Rom. 12: 5).

103 Jesus Christ is our peace (Eph. 2: 14). The peace we proclaim and

strive for, together with all people of good will, is not what the world usually understands by "peace". It is not just the absence of war. Neither is it the precarious security that is gained through a never ending arms race. Peace with justice is concerned with overcoming hostilities, not through war and bloodshed, but through the building up of that trust and confidence between peoples and nations that will lead to reconciliation. It is not power and might, but self-sacrificing love that is the basis of true peace.

104 It is in a love that forgives and trusts that we shall discover the positive dynamics capable of transforming this world of hate and wars into a world where peace is possible. And the love proposed to us by Christ includes the love of enemies, even to the highest sacrifice, the gift of one's own life. In this love, and through the power of the resurrection, the churches can discover the paths to peace. The biblical promise of shalom, encompassing the integrity of creation and the establishment of justice, remains at the heart of this vision of the peace of Christ.

105 The integrity of creation reaffirms the biblical and credal truth that "all things" both visible and invisible, have God for their Maker. This not only implies the entire dependence of the creation upon its Creator, but also connotes something about the worth and dignity of the creation itself, whose life is thus sustained and held dear by God, to whom it belongs.

106 Further, the integrity of creation means for human beings a harmonious relationship with nature. This in fact is the dominant biblical understanding of humanity with nature. The key is relationship: God, humanity and nature being with each other in harmonious relationship. It is particularly important for human beings to learn this truth, for we have thought of ourselves as primarily apart, above, separate from the rest of the creation. But we are part of the totality, sharing with the other parts of the creation a common dependence on the Creator. Nor are we strangers to the material world; we too are "flesh" (Is. 40: 11); we too receive our life daily at the hands of our Maker (Ps. 104: 29-30).

107 Through the One who loved "the world" (John 3: 16), we are called and enabled to love and to embrace with compassion the creation. Humanity is called to respond in sacrificial service to uphold the God given integrity of creation. In such service, the churches should be prepared to work with people of all faiths and world views who are concerned for the enhancement of life. In a certain sense, then, the true vocation of the human person is to be the priest of creation - to stand before the Creator on behalf of all creation (intercession), and, in turn, to interpret the good intention of the Creator to and for all.

THE FAITHLESSNESS OF THE HUMAN PARTNER

108 While God wills to covenant with all humanity, humanity continuously resists the gracious self-giving of God and rejects the partnership God offers to it. From the outset, according to the biblical testimony, the human creature was prone to spurn the humble stewardship of creation and to seek instead what it imagined a higher status in the scheme of things. The story of our species is a story of repeated faithlessness.

109 In our time, this faithlessness is manifested in the threats whose character was outlined above in Section A. Far from being united by the all-embracing love of the covenanting God, our world is cruelly and dangerously strained on account of debilitating divisions

between international, economic, political and military power blocs,
which if not overcome and democratised, will continue to be a major cause of injustice and violence in the world;

between nation-states
which if not transcended through a common sense of human solidarity will make war a continuing inevitability;

between rich nations and classes and the earth's poor
which if not overcome will perpetuate massive economic inequities;

between the races and the sexes
which if not transformed will render the building of community increasingly impossible;

between the generations
which if not reformed will aid and abet the plundering of earth's resources without concern for future generations or respect for those who have kept the earth intact for us;

between the species
which if not bridged will certainly continue to threaten global survival;

between the world religions
which if not resolved through mutual respect and dialogue will add to human alienation the weight of supernaturally-fortified estrangement and ancient patterns of mistrust.

110 Such divisions are easily named, but we must learn to understand and feel behind such nomenclature some real portion of the pain that it denotes. Human faithlessness is more than a "religious" category. It works

itself out in thoughts, words and deeds which attract the very fabric of historical existence. These and so many other "sad divisions" if forthrightly faced, can fill the heart with despair. But in the presence of God they may also engender in us a sense of the urgency of change. This sense is lacking particularly amongst the affluent of the world - thus pointing to the truth that the final faithlessness may be indifference!

THE DISOBEDIENCE OF THE COVENANT PEOPLE

Failures of Deed

111 The faithlessness of the human partner, which as Christians we also own, is however, not so much our present concern as is the faithlessness of the covenant peoples - of ourselves and our churches. Precisely as those who have believed themselves elected to covenant responsibility, we have failed to obey the commands of the divine Spirit that, in this document, we have been attempting to comprehend and articulate:

We too have failed to live as though the world belonged to, and is loved by, God.

We too have failed to be in solidarity with the victims of repression and violence, or to oppose political regimes that set their agendas above the law and violate the rights of human and non-human creatures alike.

We too have failed to tell the truth, to name evil, to challenge the *status quo*, to seek to change the world.

We too have failed by remaining silent, by refraining from protest, by not resisting oppression.

We ourselves have caused wars, supported conflicts, fostered the creation of enemy images; and we have failed to believe reconciliation possible, and remained safely aloof from the political, economic, territorial and other struggles by which our human sisters and brothers have been beset.

The truth is, we have failed even to believe the Gospel and to trust, in life and in death, the God of the covenant. Our prayers have been formal and languid, our faith simplistic, and our obedience

half-hearted.

The Failure of Thought

112 Not only in our deeds but in our thinking, we have often erred and gone astray. Indeed, behind the acts of disobedience we must trace the patterns of thought and thoughtlessness which have produced them. Theology is never above reproach! We have been misled by theologies

- that separate history from nature, limiting God's work to "salvation history" at the expense of God's action in creation;

- that confuse the gospel of the cross with triumphalistic religion, causing Christians to presume that God wills us to 'conquer' the world for Christ;

- that present the eschatological promise of the New Covenant in such a utopian or 'other worldly' way that it can finally have no earthly use;

- that capitalise on power and are coloured by a patriarchal misreading of God's sovereignty;

- that undergird the religion of progress and have no depth of understanding concerning human darkness and anguish;

- that separate spirituality from liberation, the soul from the body, and faith from politics;

- that have been co-opted by political ideologies which undermine Christian solidarity with the poor, the marginalised, the oppressed, and those who have no earthly advocates.

113 As we reflect upon the process that we have named "Justice, Peace, and the Integrity of Creation", we are led to confess our own sins of deed and thought and word, our sins of commission and omission. Our ecclesiastical divisions weaken our common witness in this struggle to thwart the dangers of our epoch. Although we are members of "one Body" our confessional divisions, made visible at the altar, prevent us from speaking and acting with one accord in the face of the life-threatening realities that we have named above. Equally, our divisions along racial, social and gender lines impoverish our common witness.

114 These things we confess sincerely and in humility borne of sheer need, How can we attain to the obedience that is demanded, not only by our participation in the covenant, but by the very urgency of our historical context?

THE PERSISTENCE OF THE COVENANTING GOD: CONFESSION AND HOPE

"I will be your God ..."

115 As we confess the recurrent faithlessness of our humanity and our Christian disobedience, we become conscious once more of the faithfulness and forgiveness of God.

116 Forgiveness does not cancel the consequences of past deeds, words, and thoughts. We remain identified with the Christian past, most of it not even of our own making; and we must learn to accept our share of responsibility for the worldly instabilities that we have tried to outline here. Christianity as such is accused today of many misleading and dangerous turnings, especially in the history of the West. For instance, it is said with some justification that our '"high" anthropology constitutes the major factor in the "historic roots of our ecological crisis" As Christians we should be ready to hear such things, and where possible to make amends.

117 But while forgiveness does not change the past, it opens the great possibility of grace: to begin again. The God of the covenant does not and will not abandon us on account of our failures of yesterday. "Today if you will hear my voice...."

118 Made bold by this promise, we resist the conclusion that our present situation is without hope. We do not base this confidence on a belief in the natural progress of things nor, still less, on any presumption that we human beings alone are capable of transforming ourselves or our world. Our hope is in God, whose faithful covenant love will empower us in the struggle for justice, peace and the integrity of creation.

Beginning in Hope

119 Therefore, against the powers of sin and death in all their forms, we confess that the Holy Spirit continues to work in the church as in the world. God regenerates the land. God dethrones the mighty and helps the humble and weak. God engenders hope, irrepressible in the victims of repression. Whatever may appear to be the case, whatever "evidence" may again be presented in the courts of those who announce God's absence or indifference, however often we ourselves are tempted to "write off this world prematurely", we profess,

The world belongs to God.
Earth is beloved of God.

120 So we give thanks to the God of the covenant for every sign and token of God's persistent grace

- for the courageous awakening of peoples throughout the world who labour for a just, participatory and sustainable society;
- for emerging economic and political pluralism in many nations;
- for improving relations between the super-powers;
- for gains in the struggle for arms reduction;
- for the reviving influence of the United Nations;
- for pressures for a new economic order, emanating often from the economically oppressed peoples;
- for the growing international consciousness of biospheric problems.

121 Clearly, impressive opportunities abound for rethinking and reshaping a more peaceful, just, and integrated world, and as churches and Christians we know ourselves to be called and enabled to participate in these developments. We do not even have too much to initiate as simply to participate in actions and movements that have already begun in other quarters, through other auspices! God is at work in the world. The world belongs to God!

REPENTANCE AND RENEWAL OF THE COVENANT COMMUNITY

From the Love of Power to the Power of Love

122 At this strategic moment in human history, the divine Spirit is calling us to turn from the love of power to the power of love, to renounce our vain and now mostly empty attempts to celebrate human autonomy and to renew our partnership with God. The world does not belong to us. The world belongs to God.

123 Only through the Spirit shall we find both the will and the courage to renew our covenant with the God to whom the world belongs. Only through the pain of profound repentance shall our own spirits be renewed. Only by losing ourselves shall we find ourselves. Those of us who have been accustomed to being "first" all likelihood have to discover the truth of Jesus' saying about such people - that they may achieve self-knowledge only through the experience of finding themselves "last"

124 Yet we profess ourselves ready to submit to such disciplines and corrections, for apart from them our world will not pass beyond the valley of the shadow of its present death. The covenant people has never undergone renewal without profound repentance.

Contextualisation of the Renewal

125 The renewal of the covenant on the part of the community of faith

has to be contextualised and made concrete in every generation. Remembering God's promise and covenantal gift, and proclaiming God's will for our own global situation, our renewal today must concentrate itself upon the development of new ways of relating to one another - economically, sexually, nationally and internationally (justice and peace); and new ways of relating as human beings to the other creatures and our common habitat, the earth (integrity of creation).

126 Heretofore, and still today, we have relied upon conventions and structures of inter-human relatedness which have always been unjust and violent, but which now, in the light of our manifest crisis, must be regarded as impossible - except as ways leading to degradation and possible extinction. The hierarchic ordering of the relationships between possessors and the dispossessed, between the powerful and the powerless, between rich and poor, between men and women, between the generations "in charge" and the old and the young: such ordering must now and forever be profoundly questioned by human reason as by Christian faith. Justice in a global society is no longer merely a moral good, it is a political necessity. Peace in the global village is no longer just an ideal, which may be set aside in favour of 'just war' as soon as civility turns sour! It is a matter of survival.

127 Heretofore, and still today we have thought ourselves, as humans, vastly superior to the other creatures of God. Having been assured time and again that "unlike other animals" we were rational, free and immortal, we have forgotten that our rationality, freedom, dexterity, and capacity to dream of eternity have been granted us so that we might serve 'the animals' as stewards.

128 Will history record that we were able to make this great transition from being "lords and possessors of nature" to keepers of an infinitely precious and mysteriously integrated planet?

Acts of Commitment

129 Scripture describes how the people of God came together at critical moments in their history in a ceremony that they called "the renewal of the covenant" (Deut. 31: 9-13; cf. 2 Kings 23: 1-3). The event followed a precise formula in which the people remembered God's liberating acts, re-examined themselves in the light of God's law, and renewed their commitments as the people of the covenant in their time and place.

130 This scriptural tradition suggests a pattern for our present use. It involves the following elements:

131 **Remembering:** The act of covenanting is in response to God's

saving action in history - for Christians an action most fully expressed in "Jesus Christ and him crucified" (I Cor. 2: 2). Remembering God's initiating grace keeps our hope alive and is the only sound foundation upon which our covenants with one another can be made or kept.

132 **Professing:** In renewing the covenant, the people took cognisance of their own historical situation and shaped their rethinking of the meaning of covenantal obedience in response to the exigencies of that situation. This usually entailed challenging the prevailing structures of power and identifying the non-negotiable elements of their common affirmation of faith.

133 **Renouncing:** A crucial element in the renewal of the covenant was the elimination of idolatry. "Thou shalt have no other gods before me: (Ex. 21: 2-3). "Choose this day whom you will serve!" (Josh. 24: 14 ff.). The choice, then as now, is between a covenant with the deities of death or conversion to the God of life.

134 **Celebrating:** The renewal ceremony was concluded with a feast, during which the people celebrated their fellowship with God and with one another (Ex. 24: 1-11). The symbolism here is profound. God's covenant centres wholly on the people. The Spirit effects the transformation of the covenant people "from below" by renewing and empowering them both individually and corporately. From this celebratory meal, the people move out into the world to bear witness to the God who wills the world's "abundant life".

135 **Opening out:** God's covenant embraces the whole creation; it is inclusive and open to all. The covenant community is elected to responsibility within the whole community.

NOTES

[1] - The information given in this part has been checked to the extent possible with authoritative sources.

[2] - IMAGE: Christ and Art in Asia, No. 88,1987.

[3] - Gabriele Dietrich in memory of her friend Rajini who was martyred in Jaffna, Sri Lanka, on 22 September, 1989.

[4] - A story told at the consultations on the Integrity of Creation, Granvollen, Norway, February, 1988.

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The World Convocation on Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation took place in March 1990 in Seoul, the Republic of Korea. The debates, however, continue.

Many of the documents prepared during the process leading up to the convocation are now out of print and some materials presented at the event are not readily available in English. The intention of this book is to help the continuing debate by making all the JPIC resource materials available in one volume.

The materials are presented in four sections: worship, meditations and sermons, messages, and ecumenical responses which includes some of the major documents produced during the JPIC process. Together they capture the convocation's common positions and unresolved tensions which continue to make Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation one of the most important ecumenical concerns of the decade.

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